

## **SOCIAL FORCES**

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# SOCIAL FORCES

By EDWARD T. DEVINE

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To  
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## CONTENTS

	Page
I. The New View.....	3
II. A Christmas Survey.....	17
III. The Right View of the Child.....	25
IV. The Abnormality of Vice.....	37
V. Depravity or Maladjustment?.....	45
VI. Normal and Ideal.....	53
VII. The Social Ideal.....	61
VIII. Perversion of Institutions.....	69
IX. For the 25th Anniversary.....	77
X. A New View of Poverty.....	85
XI. The Treatment of Poverty.....	97
XII. A Plea for Charity.....	107
XIII. Income and Relief Measures.....	117
XIV. The Naïve View of Relief.....	129
XV. Anomalies in New York.....	137
XVI. The Pittsburgh Survey.....	145
XVII. The Bread Line.....	155
XVIII. An Early Social Economist.....	163
XIX. The Maid of Orleans: A Saint of the Church.....	171
XX. The Russell Sage Foundation.....	179
XXI. John Stewart Kennedy's Will.....	187
XXII. The Hudson-Fulton Recessional.....	195
XXIII. The Need for a Religious Awakening.....	203
XXIV. Religion and Progress.....	211
XXV. What We Believe.....	221



I

THE NEW VIEW



## I

### THE NEW VIEW

**W**E begin with the new view of charity. Possibly no other human relation depends so much upon the point of view. The mendicant's alms, the pauper's maintenance, the impostor's largess, the bitter bread of degrading dependence, gifts even to a worthy cause wrung from an uneasy conscience, and that kind of charity which is but a sorry substitute for justice denied, are all so many aspects of charity which tend to make it a mockery among men. There is another view. In an imperfect world, full of adverse conditions which are in large part an evil inheritance, the new view makes of charity a type of anticipatory justice. The new view is that charity may lighten an unreasonable and intolerable

## SOCIAL

burden, or transfer it to broader and stronger shoulders; that it may bring opportunity to the child of an unfavorable heredity and an unfavorable environment; that it may deal not only with individuals who suffer, but with social conditions which tend to perpetuate crime, pauperism, and degeneracy.

Those who have the new view of charity and believe in it are one in spirit with those who have the old view and abjure it. Out of the revolt against the charity of the old view, the faith in the new charity was born. The new view is vital. Perhaps it is not vital that it be called a new view of charity. If there are some, as there are, for whom the new view of charity has been the means of attaining to new views of other social relations, there are doubtless others to whom the word is a stumbling block.

The new view is a social view, which seeks in all movements, whether of research or of remedial action, for the common welfare. The new view is many sided, for it seeks to "see life steadily and see it whole." The home, the factory, the school,

## FORCES

the church, and the playground are all within its range. Disease, misery, and crime are seen, but seen in their true proportions, as a dark border land into which constantly new streams of light and energy are pouring with promise of ultimately taking possession.

It was the old view, founded upon wisdom and experience, that children must early be taught habits of industry. It is the new view that children must not be exploited for commercial gain, and that they must be not only taught but protected.

It was the old view, humane and considerate, that the sick must be tenderly cared for, naturally by the nearest of kin. It is the new view that disease must be understood and overcome, that hospitals, dispensaries, surgical and medical treatment, nursing, and preventive measures must be developed and dovetailed into a general social scheme for the elimination of preventable disease and a very substantial reduction in the prevalence of such diseases as cannot as yet be classed as preventable.

## SOCIAL

It was the old view that crime is a constant factor in society, resulting from natural depravity or from persistent personal causes. It is the new view that political, economic, and social institutions, and especially the prevailing method of administering justice and the penal system, have much to do with the amount and kind of crime. Sixty years ago an English judge, charging the grand jury, cited an instance of a boy who at the age of twelve was convicted of a minor offense; within the twenty-one months next succeeding he was again convicted seven times. The remarkable aspect of the case was that society incurred this very considerable expense for no other apparent purpose than to train and confirm the youth in a career of crime. After sixty years, so accustomed are we to look upon courts and prisons and even reformatories in the old traditional way, it is still a new view for the great majority that short terms of imprisonment for petty offenses are as pernicious and unnecessary as they are common.

It was—or, rather, it is necessary to say, it is

## FORCES

the old view that a penal code and courts of justice can apportion penalties in accordance with the demerit of convicted offenders. It is the new view that neither courts nor laws can measure penalties and demerit on the same scale; and that, while courts may determine guilt and innocence, the length and the conditions of detention are questions which, under proper restrictions, should be left to competent persons who have had nothing to do with prosecution or trial, but who are capable of deciding, as physicians decide in regard to the insane, when, if at all, the offenders may safely be restored to society.

It is the old view that wages are determined by the law of supply and demand. It is the new view that the standard of living influences wages, and that employers may profitably anticipate a possibly violent, deferred readjustment by considering from time to time whether forces are at work which have a tendency to raise the standard of living above the existing level, imposed, it may be, by tradition, by some local or temporary disadvantage under which employes labor, or

by other adverse conditions which intelligent co-operation between employer and employee might remove to their mutual advantage. It is the old view that employers are liable for damages resulting from industrial accident, when the injured employee can affirmatively prove that there was no contributory negligence on his part, that it was not caused by the fault or negligence of a fellow employee, and that numerous other traditions and fictions cannot be made to apply to his particular case. It is the new view that each industry should, from its undivided profits, bear the responsibility of its deaths and injuries, rather than the family of the killed or disabled workman. It is the new view that on this theory of compensation for injuries life-saving appliances will be introduced more promptly, greater care exercised in the selection of employes, and the burdens of industry more equitably distributed than under the present system.

It is the old view that education is the training in letters of a select class—a view which has survived the application of many brilliant discoveries

## FORCES

in psychology and in the science of education. It is the new view that education is for all men and women one of the permanent interests of human life; that the school period is one of adjustment to the actual occupations and home life of later years; that it must be far more diversified than heretofore, with less of routine drill and more of vital interest in the curriculum, with such rearrangement in the order of studies as will bring the growing child in succession to the tasks for which he is fitted, and with greatly increased attention to a normal physical development and a speedy correction of physical defects which will make possible normal intellectual and moral growth. It is the old view that truancy, backwardness, and incorrigibility were to be corrected by the rod, or else, if one held with the opposite school, by overflowing sympathy and kindness. It is the new view that a physical examination will often reveal the cause of backwardness; that truancy is to be checked, not indeed without strict discipline, but chiefly by making the school a center of interest and attraction; and that in-

## SOCIAL

corrigible means only not corrigible by such means as we have had the skill and wisdom to apply. Incurrigibility is not so much a verdict against the child as a confession of the limitations of the parent or teacher or environment.

It is the old view that those who found a charity or conduct a benevolent institution of any kind are from the mere fact of this association with charity to be looked upon with a certain degree of deference, their selfishness and eccentricities to be excused, their motives to be accepted as sufficient justification for any follies and mistakes. It is the new view that effort expended in charity, as in any other direction, is to be judged by its result; that efficiency and common sense are essential in the relief of the unfortunate as in any other equally important undertaking; that preparation and training and experience have their appropriate place in social work as in other serious callings.

It is the old view that each agency for social betterment is a law unto itself. In the new view co-operation is the keynote. The old view em-

## FORCES

phasized the institution, the society, the mechanism by which it was sought to do good. The new view is of the end to be accomplished, subordinating the agency, the method, and the worker to the end in view, to the family in trouble, to the individual who is in need, to the condition which is to be remedied. The new view is incompatible with institutionalism, with fruitless isolated labor, with working at cross purposes. The new view is democratic, co-operative, enthusiastic. The new view looks difficulties undauntedly in the face and even insists upon revealing all their magnitude, but it discovers also the facts that are favorable—the elements of success. The new view is radical in its desire to get to the root of all social problems, but it is conservative in the best sense in that it holds firmly to that which has been wrought out for good in the laborious progress of mankind. It has no sympathy with destructive radicalism, but even less with that conservatism which is a cloak for special privilege and exploitation.

The new view is that behind every form of

## SOCIAL

degeneration, dependence, and injustice there is apt to be some entrenched pecuniary interest which it is desirable to discover and with which it is the duty of society to deal. It is the old view that the depraved man is the natural man, and that some families are inherently superior to others merely because of their better ancestry. It is the new view that there are no differences between the poor man and his normal neighbors which cannot be rapidly obliterated. The old view put the emphasis on the defects and weaknesses revealed by the family history. The new view puts the emphasis on latent powers, new motives, and favorable conditions, on the release and guidance of energy, rather than its restraint.

Our fundamental purpose is the more complete attainment of the new view. If that appear vague and indefinite, and a sceptical reader, notwithstanding all our illustrations, still ask, The new view of what? we reply roundly, The new view of life—the new view of the common welfare; the new view of industrial and social forces; the new view of childhood, of woman-

## FORCES

hood and manhood; the new view of housing as the basis of domestic life; the new view of industrial occupations and the conditions under which they are carried on; the new view of misery and crime and disease as eradicable; the new view of charity, of reformation, of discipline, of human society; the new view of work, of recreation, of neighborhood; and, at last, the new view, prophetic though it be, of a social order in which ancient wrongs shall be righted, new corruptions foreseen and prevented, the nearest approach to equality of opportunity assured, and the individual re-discovered under conditions vastly more favorable for his greatest usefulness to his fellows and for the highest development of all his powers.

April 20, 1907



## II

### A CHRISTMAS SURVEY



## II

### A CHRISTMAS SURVEY

**I**N the social progress of modern communities there are suitable occasions both for the broad survey and for the searching survey; both for a look at the general features of the situation, and for an engineer's inquiry as to the strength of foundations, the quality of materials, and the suitability of proposed devices for overcoming difficulties. It may appear that the Christmas season is especially appropriate for the broad survey, for the general, superficial, indifferent outlook on life. This is the genial season when "every prospect pleases," and even man passes over into the assets side of nature's great account. Good fellowship, good cheer, good will to men, are the keynote of the time; and sur-

## SOCIAL

veyors' instruments, charts, diagrams, and statistics seem out of place. Let us eat and drink,—not because to-morrow we die, but because the Son of Man came eating and drinking with Pharisees and with publicans, angelic messages of peace heralding His birth, messages of forgiveness and assurance of paradise on His departing breath.

It is well to catch the spirit of Christmas, the spirit of peace and good will. Feasting and gifts are its natural expressions. Hospitality and good cheer are its background. Faith is stronger, and hope is brighter, and love is greater for the Christmas season; and by the inspiration of the spirit of the holiday we get a brilliant glimpse of a transfigured humanity—a social survey, momentary, elusive, evanescent, yet rich in the promise of a better day, a vision which cannot be materialized in tabernacles, but which may be enshrined in human aspiration and in social ideals, abiding not as a crystallized institution, but as a living inspiration.

If it is well to catch this fleeting survey under the influence of intimate, seasonal, and temporary

## FORCES

relationships, it is still better to approach the serious examination of our actual conditions under the guidance of the same spirit of peace and good will. Only the fool can be content in his heart to invite relatives and friends and strangers to sit with him at dinner, and make them gifts, feeling the glow of human sympathy and brotherhood which the simple, unaffected courtesy incites, and then deliberately shut out of his life the warmer glow of deeper satisfaction which comes from taking an effective part in righting an injustice, creating a new opportunity for any of the children of men, bringing genuine relief to any real distress. Let the Christmas season also be the time for making a searching survey of social needs, of unused resources and unutilized powers, of antiquated institutions, of outgrown prejudices, of unnecessary hardships, preventable suffering, and remediable ills. Let the Christmas season be the time for finding out what new contributions of money and what further contributions of service are called for by new needs or by new possibilities of advance; for

## SOCIAL

finding out what active personal participation in some good cause will project the spirit of Christmas into the whole year to come.

What will such a survey as this disclose? It will show children without playgrounds, and in the children's court,—when they are not instead in the ordinary criminal courts and jails. It will show communities without adequate schools, and very few with any schools in which there is a curriculum adapted to the conditions of modern social and industrial life. It will show women engaged, without the interruptions for which there is physiological necessity, in occupations for which they are physically unfitted, for excessive hours, and under bad conditions. It will show the saloon still dominant in many cities, the gambling house doing its vicious work, and vice encouraged, supported, and "regulated" in the interest of a "system," in which municipal contracts and privileges are an integral part. It will show congestion of population, overcrowding in tenements, abnormally high rents, insufficient food and clothing, low standards of living

## FORCES

by every rational test. It will show poverty and overwork, child labor and under-employment for able-bodied adults. It will show the exploitation of weakness and ignorance by pawnshops, by chattel mortgages, by salary loans, by patent medicines, by bucket shops and pool rooms, by fraudulent employment bureaus, by the sale of liquor to the inebriate, and by the unspeakable white slave traffic.

The social survey may appear to be far from a pleasurable undertaking, but there is no satisfaction comparable to the constructive examination of any one of these serious evils, with a view to measuring its strength, with a view to the casting out of the devils that have taken possession of the bodies and souls of unfortunate men. It is precisely in the spirit of the Christmas season that all men may be asked to help put a stop to excessive hours of labor and injurious, health-destroying processes, and to bring the full pressure of enlightened public opinion to bear on the raising of low wages and the maintenance of high standards. It is precisely in the spirit of Christmas that

## SOCIAL FORCES

the co-operation of all good citizens may be demanded in the socializing of hospitals, relief societies, and other charitable institutions, of public schools, health departments, parks, police systems, and courts of justice. Settlements work all the year round in the Christmas spirit, and so do child labor committees, associations for the prevention of tuberculosis, playground associations, and charity organization societies. If, at any point, the spirit of good will should fail, it is quite within the power of contributors and members to restore it. The Christian whose faith is strengthened for more vigorous work by the remembrance of the nativity of the Savior need have no difficulty in finding at his hand work to be done for the healing of the sick, the lifting up of the fallen, the strengthening of the weak, and the driving of the money changers from the temples. To gain a knowledge of conditions and to lend a hand to improve them will be to enter the communion of those for whom Christmas is not a day in December, but a token of unending service and good cheer.

December 5, 1908

### III

## THE RIGHT VIEW OF THE CHILD



### III

#### THE RIGHT VIEW OF THE CHILD

**I**N certain cotton-raising districts of the South there is a strange saying that cotton and ignorance go naturally together. A man's wealth—that is to say, not his well-being, which would be right enough, but his money income—is measured by the number of his children, and not, as it should be, by the efficiency of the adult. Could there be a clearer expression of the old discredited view of the child? The bag slung about the neck for the cotton is made to fit the child, while the school term is adjusted not to the child but to the working season. The child is the center of the economic world and not the center of the educational and domestic world, and this means that the child is for exploitation and profit, rather than for nurture

## SOCIAL

and protection. Thus cotton and ignorance are linked together—not naturally, but most unnaturally, and the industry which is otherwise the pride of the South and of America is blighted, not only in the mill but from the hour of its planting, joining the sweated industries of the northern cities and the glass works of northern towns as an active cause of race degeneracy and race suicide. Though it may be reprehensible for the race to perish for lack of births, it is a more shameful thing to destroy the vitality, to dwarf the minds, to refuse the natural and necessary protection of childhood to the children who are born.

The new view of the child, which we may place against this background, has not been revealed by any single miraculous illumination. Would that some apostle on the way to Damascus could have a glorious vision of the divinity indwelling in the soul and body of the unspoiled child! But it is not so that social workers are guided to the formulation of their new ideals.

Piecemeal and fragmentary is the process by which we put together the outlines of the society

## FORCES

which we would create; doubtful and arduous the advance towards it. The new view of anything, if it is a true and useful view, is likely to be but a synthesis, or a new interpretation, of old ideas; a convincing statement which we may all comprehend of ideas long held here and there by a few people of extraordinary insight. It is not necessary, as Socrates thought, that philosophers become kings, or kings philosophers, but only that the speculations of the philosopher be put into language which kings may understand. We, therefore, we citizens and kings of America, not setting ourselves up as philosophers, in describing our new view of the child may justly appropriate some of the fragmentary older new views which have been gained from time to time.

We may begin by urging the right of the conceived child in the mother's womb to be born. When the Children's Bureau is established in Washington it may well begin its labors by an investigation of sterility, abortions, and still births. The new view, the religious view, the social view, the physiological view, the rational

## SOCIAL

view of the child from every standpoint, is that the right to birth itself must not be abridged. If disease interferes with it, then disease must be overcome. If deliberate crime interferes with it, then crime must be checked. If unscrupulous medical skill interferes with it, that medical practice must be brought more completely under professional ban and criminal prosecution. If the employment of women in factories interferes with it, then that employment must be curtailed. If ignorance and vicious indulgence interfere with it, then education at an early age by parents and teachers and physicians and others must take the place of the conspiracy of silence.

The right to be well-born is followed, in the new view of the child, by the right to grow up. We are doing better than our forefathers in this respect. Two hundred years ago in London, three-quarters of all the children that were born died before the completion of their fifth year. Decade after decade that percentage has been pushed down until now it is something like twenty-five instead of seventy-five per cent.

## FORCES

Even now, in the twentieth century, one-seventh of all the babies born in New York die before they reach the age of one year. Milk poisoning, ignorance of mothers as to how to feed and care for their children, inability to nurse them, either for physical or for economic reasons, lack of necessary facilities for surgical and medical treatment, and lack of knowledge in the rank and file of the medical profession concerning the diagnosis and treatment of infantile disorders, are among the causes for this high mortality among infants. The greatest advances of medical science have been in this field, and the substantial reduction in the death rate of many communities is due to the saving of the lives of babies more than to reduction at any later age. It is the new view, the social view, that this process should be carried farther, and that those who are born shall be permitted not only to survive, but to become physically healthy and strong. The Children's Bureau will naturally deal with that subject also. The Federal government should study continuously the problems of illegitimacy, infant mor-

talities, illiteracy, feeble-mindedness, orphanage, child dependence, and child labor, just as it studies, and properly studies, the soils, the forests, the fisheries, and the crops.

The third element in the new view of the child is that he has a right to be happy, even in school. Pestalozzi and Froebel helped us to think that out. Jane Addams has suggested that one day we shall be ashamed of our present arguments for the prohibition of child labor—that it is physically destructive and educationally disastrous—although these seem like reasonably adequate arguments to start with, and shall recognize that the joyousness of childhood, the glorious fulness of enjoyment for which children are by nature adapted, and by their Creator intended, is in itself a worthy end of legislation and social concern. Bronson Alcott, of whom it is said that his greatest contribution to American literature was his daughter, says that a happy childhood is the prelude to a ripe manhood. It is no artificial, hothouse, forced development of something which might be called happiness that we seek, but the

## FORCES

spontaneous activity and growth of a protected, unexploited childhood.

It is a part of this new view, fourth, that the child has a right to become a useful member of society. This implies industrial—or, stating it more broadly—vocational education. It supports the suggestion made in one of the publications of the National Child Labor Committee that the school day might well be made longer, with greater variety in curriculum; and that the work which we deny, and rightly deny, in the factory for profit, may be demanded in the school for an hour or two or more daily for education and training. The disingenuous arguments as to the educational value of specialized long continued factory labor may be tested by the willingness of those who make them to introduce genuinely educational employment, with the element of profit eliminated, into the school curriculum, where alone it belongs. Industrial efficiency is diminished or destroyed and not increased by child labor.

There is one final element in the new view of the child, the right to inherit the past more and more

fully, the right to begin farther and farther along, the right not only to begin where the parent began—even that is denied when, through destroying the strength and retarding the education of children, race degeneracy sets in—the right which we now assert is the right not only to be protected against degeneracy, but the right to progress. It is the new view of the child, the American view, that the child is worthy of the parent's sacrifice, that he must mount upon our shoulders and climb higher, that not only in accumulated possessions, but also in mastery over the physical universe, in spiritual attainment, in the power to serve his fellow men and to glorify God, he shall rise above his father's level. It is not a new idea. Hector, on the plains of Troy, had a notion that men might say of Astyanax that he was a far better man than his father; and perhaps they did, or would have done so had Hector lived to protect and rear him. In a given instance the plan may fail, but the plan itself is significant for the father and for the child.

The American child is not unknown in text books and essays and fiction. He has been pic-

## FORCES

tured as smart, precocious, disrespectful, and offensive. The child of the rich and preoccupied American, and of the vain and indulgent American, has sharpened the pencil of the caricaturist. Kipling, in *Captains Courageous*, plucked such a child from the liner and put him at the work on a fishing dory on the Banks of Newfoundland which his regeneration required. The neglected and spoiled child of foolish indulgence, and the neglected and spoiled child of avaricious poverty, tend to develop similar or equally lamentable traits. In neither case is there recognition of these fundamental elements in what we have called the right view of the child from birth: physical protection, joyous infancy, useful education, and an ever fuller inheritance of the accumulated riches of civilization.

April 25, 1908




# **IV**

## **THE ABNORMALITY OF VICE**



## IV

### THE ABNORMALITY OF VICE

 AMONG the fallacies which have power to mislead men to their destruction and communities to their vital injury, there is none more mischievous than the assumption that vice is merely excess, a more or less harmless and half pardonable indulgence in pleasures from which ordinary persons are restrained by a stern sense of duty, the satisfying of an entirely natural appetite in perhaps unconventional, but still, from a physiological and rational point of view, quite normal ways.

The fact is that neither natural appetite nor what has traditionally been known as the romantic passion has much to do with the system of vice which has fastened itself upon our modern communities. Prostitution and the diseases in its

train, whether we like it or not, are matters of social concern. The first step in forming a public policy for dealing with them is to understand the essential character of the foundation upon which the vice system of our towns and cities rests. When we assume, as some do openly and many more tacitly, that vice is inherently attractive, that it appeals to an ineradicable instinct in human nature, and that we can at best only regulate certain of its more obnoxious and flaunting manifestations, we are giving the strongest possible support to the active, but not ineradicable, forces which make for vice. It is not so. Vice is not inherently attractive, but repulsive. It lives and flourishes not because men and women have healthy appetites and instincts, but because there is money to be made by developing and keeping alive unhealthy appetites and abnormal instincts. Vice reeks with foul disease, but with more foul cupidity. If it could be deprived of the unholy profits which it yields to cadets, proprietors, police, and politicians, its foundations would change from rock to crumbling sand.

## FORCES

It needs no argument that the vast body of working men and women, and of those who are legitimately engaged in any honorable calling, are not kept from indulgence in vice by external restraint, or by a constant effort of will. An individual may indeed have temptations which it requires heroic efforts and even the encouragement of friends to resist, but a higher morality and a more natural adjustment eventually lessen or remove these temptations, and the vast majority turn from vice because it does not attract them. The end in view in religion, in family training, in public education, in that very civilization of which church and home and school are normal, typical features, and prostitution and alcoholism and poverty are typically abnormal features, is the development of individuals who live honest and virtuous lives because they prefer it, because it is easier, because honesty and decency are natural.

Five obstacles are encountered. First, adult ignorance of the consequences. That one venereal disease is the principal cause of sterile marriages, and another the most virulent cause of physical

degeneracy, leading directly to insanity, paralysis, blindness, and other afflictions, should be generally known and appropriate defensive measures devised. Such facts as these are not generally known, and many persons become nervous as soon as it is attempted to make them known.

Second, the neglect of the proper education of children. There is no suggestion that children should be dragged through the mire of unnecessary and premature acquaintance with evil. What should be taught is an appreciation of health and vigor and of the conditions of their preservation. The processes of reproduction should be explained in the first instance, and this necessarily means at an earlier age than is usually supposed, by parents, teachers, pastors, physicians, or friends, and should not be associated, in their first presentation, with vile suggestion.

Third, adverse economic and social conditions. Low wages in factories and stores, overwork, with intermittent periods of compulsory idleness without income, overcrowding and lack of privacy in tenements, and other destructive conditions at

## FORCES

home and at work, are an appreciable factor in keeping up the supply of victims for the vice system. Privation and hard work do not of themselves make either prostitutes or their patrons, but, in extreme degrees, they help to make unhealthy appetites and they bring to the average person extraordinary temptations.

Fourth, corrupt police and inefficient judiciary. We treat prostitution as a crime, but we treat it very inefficiently. Probably it would be extreme to describe those sections of the penal code which relate to the subject, the futile fine system, with the shadow of the cell and the workhouse in the background, as nothing more than a base of operations for political and police corruption; and yet as these matters are now handled in most cities, this would seem to be their chief purpose.

Fifth, the financial stake. It is notorious that bills adverse to race track gambling in New York were opposed for the profits to be made in exploiting one human weakness. Child labor continues, not because there are differences of opinion about it among disinterested people, but because there is

## SOCIAL FORCES

much money to be made by hiring children. Vice similarly has its white slave traffic, its organized system of decoying girls, its ramifications with hotels, amusement-resorts, disorderly houses and flats, and the police force.

Not all disorderly women are unfortunate and unwilling victims of adverse circumstances. They are often, perhaps usually, offenders, and are to be so treated—humanely and intelligently. This we are not doing. Far worse, however, is our failure to treat as felons of an infinitely more dangerous stamp all who make money or hold position or power by encouraging and perpetuating the vice system.

April 18, 1908

V

DEPRAVITY OR MALADJUSTMENT?



## V

### DEPRAVITY OR MALADJUSTMENT?

**T**HE average good citizen with an income above a thousand dollars a year has still much to learn about the true character of his fellow citizens whose incomes are below the point at which, in the language of the day, they are able to maintain a normal standard of living.

In the olden days—when debtors were lodged in jail, as they still are now and then; when sturdy vagrants were not allowed to go abroad and were punished severely at home, as they still are by neglect if not by overt act; when wages were fixed by statute, lest they be too high, whereas our concern now is in the contrary direction; when there was religious sanction for the doctrine that patient submission to injustice, cruelty, and pri-

## SOCIAL

vation in this life would be compensated by rewards hereafter, and that society need not therefore much concern itself about such matters—it was easy enough to identify the poor with the depraved, the dependent with the criminal, and to assume common characteristics for these lower orders sharply distinguishing them from their betters.

In free and democratic America these internal class distinctions have had less influence, but on the other hand differences of race, language, and religion have created new barriers, misunderstandings, and prejudices which have perpetuated the miserable old delusion. The lesson which we have learned but imperfectly, and which we must learn completely, is that the destruction of the poor is not their depravity, or their perversity, or their personal peculiarities of any kind, but their poverty. The only generalization which it is safe to make about the dependent poor is that they are poor. Devotion to ideals, heroic sacrifice, stern self-denial, unflagging persistence, and whatever other virtue you choose to name, are

## FORCES

to be found among the poor, and a full assortment of the common failings of the race is theirs also. The differentiating factors are economic rather than moral or religious, social rather than personal, accidental and remediable rather than characteristic and fundamental.

These deeper likenesses have been obscured, and the superficial differences exaggerated to the point of caricature, by the instinctive dislike and distrust felt by the first comer in the new land towards his successors, and by each assimilated or partially assimilated people towards the still later arrivals. Individuals of superior endowment have always quickly escaped from the disabilities of a strange language and a new environment, but there have remained behind, as if in a low-lying bank of fog, such as could not push ahead; and all the original antipathy against the foreigner, all the misunderstanding of the alien, amounting to open scorn and hatred at its worst and condescension in its more benign aspect, are visited upon these submerged peoples. Irish and Italian Catholic, Russian and Austrian Jew,

## SOCIAL

beer-drinking German, French Canadian, Mexican half-breed, Oriental coolie, Slav, Syrian, Negro,—how they have all in turn been made to feel, though in vastly different degree, that the hand of man was against them! Some of these groups have conspicuously gained their foothold, overcoming obstacles which were perhaps slight in the first place; and others, so far as human eye can foresee, may never successfully overcome them. But this is certain, that the poor among them have fallen doubly heir to their disadvantages, and suffer in public esteem not for their own faults but for prejudices, misunderstandings, and traditions from which those who have succeeded in adapting themselves to new conditions have fortunately, though often only slowly and painfully, become free.

Does not this suggest that the main cause for dependence and privation in this country is maladjustment rather than depravity? No disposition to idealize the poor, or to permit sentimentality to usurp the place of reason and common sense, is implied in calling sharply in question

## FORCES

the traditional attitude of those who assume personal fault or shortcoming as an explanation for need, and who sigh over the improvidence, the perversity, and the ignorance of the poor as if they were so obvious as to need no demonstration, and so ineradicable as to lead naturally to profound discouragement.

The truth is that industrial accidents and sickness and widowhood and orphanage and insufficient food and insanitary dwellings are conditions which accompany dependence on charitable relief so frequently as to lead to the just suspicion that they are fundamental causes. The truth is that many families which are not now self-supporting would be so if they were in another locality; that others would be entirely self-supporting except for irregularity of employment for which they are no more responsible than their children in the kindergarten; that others would be self-supporting if in growing youth an entirely different sort of education had been given them, education which in a few enlightened communities we are now trying to give their children; that others

## SOCIAL FORCES

would be self-supporting if wages in industries which are undeniably profitable to their proprietors paid a living wage to employees; that others would be self-supporting if there had been some safe, widely known, and remunerative opportunity for investing their savings.

Now all these illustrations—and they are only illustrations—point towards maladjustment rather than to personal fault, and it behooves charitable agencies to weigh thoughtfully the probability at least that herein lies the more important part of their problem. “Total depravity is a comfortable doctrine,” said the old lady in a New England prayer meeting, “and I believe in it, but I never knew anyone to live up to it.” Maladjustment is a very uncomfortable doctrine, but it is easy, alas, to find many who live up to it.

October 31, 1908

## VI

### NORMAL AND IDEAL



## VI

### NORMAL AND IDEAL

**T**HE social economist is sometimes confused with the utopian. They are, however, very distinct types of reformers. The utopian dreams of an ideal. The social economist seeks to establish the normal. The one fixes his gaze upon an imaginary nowhere. The other is concerned with actual communities of human beings. The one is a perfectionist, measuring the distance between our best but still imperfect humanity and a goal which he discerns with prophetic eye. The other is a normalist, measuring the distance between the recognized standards of today and the deplorable failure of multitudes to attain those standards. The utopian would hold mankind responsible for future progress. The economist would press the

more immediate responsibility for removing the obstacles which prevent so large a number from sharing in the progress already achieved. The utopian arrives at his destination by a bold flight of the imagination, and secures his paradise by insisting upon isolation or some other arbitrary device. The economist has no such short cuts. He recognizes that he must find out about abnormal conditions and apply the remedies for them where they lie. Disease, ignorance, poverty, overcrowding, undernourishment, intemperance, overwork, irregularity of employment, monopoly, exploitation, and whatever besides prevents any single individual, and still more any large number, from living up to the normal standards of their own century, are the subject matter of his agonizing dreams and of his vigilant watch.

The poverty of our language denies us an appropriate word for the precise point of view which we are attempting to present. We have searched diligently but in vain for the word that will express, better than "normalist," the conception of the social worker who is primarily concerned not with

## FORCES

lifting humanity to a higher level, but with eradicating the maladjustments, the abnormalities, the needless inequalities, which prevent our realizing our own reasonable standards. The employment of children of tender years is no part of the present standards of any intelligent American community. It is no part of the standards of stockholders in cotton mills, coal mines, or glass works. Yet because American communities and stockholders have not taken the trouble or displayed the ingenuity essential to give effect to their standards, they remain responsible for a great evil. There is a gulf between our knowledge, even our emotional appreciation, of the objections to child labor under the conditions of modern industry, and our accomplishment. As a result of this disparity we permit a race of exploited children, physically blighted, mentally dwarfed, spiritually embittered. Effective child labor laws are, therefore, in the program of social work.

It is no part of our standards that there should be a maladjustment between work and workers, that laborers should be idle merely because they

## SOCIAL

do not have reliable information concerning an existing demand for the very kind of work which they are able and willing to do. It is an obvious undertaking, therefore, for the social economist to create some effective sort of employment exchange, though the utopian would expect so simple a matter to take care of itself.

The normalist program is one of moderation and reasonableness. It bases its demands upon solid ascertainable facts and verifiable evidence. Where expert advice is appropriate it follows the expert, and where professional opinion is involved it summons professional co-operation. Experts and distinguished representatives of the professions respond enthusiastically for the reason that what is proposed to them is merely that the standards already well recognized by themselves shall become universal, and that possibilities for the common good, of which they are themselves well aware, shall become realities through the co-operation of social forces which they have perhaps heretofore sought in vain to bring into effective action.

## FORCES

Although a program of reason and moderation, normalism is not a program of compromise or opportunism. Whether action is to be taken is in each case a question of evidence. What action is to be taken is a matter of judgment. Given, however, a clear case in which injustice, hardship, or deprivation results from a failure in the social mechanism by which our social standards fail of realization, and the path of the reformer is clear. Easy-going optimism and paralyzing pessimism are equally beside the mark. It is no time for concessions to vested interests or to ancient traditions or to blind prejudices. The appropriate remedy should be applied. The strong who know and enjoy the normal standards should share them. If the law is the instrument which lies nearest at hand, the law should be invoked. If agitation and popular education give greater promise of results they should be undertaken. If private relief measures are indicated, they should be initiated and pressed upon the favorable consideration of the public. If some new institution is requisite, it should be established.

## SOCIAL FORCES

Legislation, social movements, philanthropic enterprises, education, voluntary changes in industrial or commercial methods, are all legitimate means—not the only means—of diffusing throughout society the normal standards which have been already attained by intellectual and moral progress. It is this process in which the social economist is deeply concerned.

July 3, 1909

## VII

### THE SOCIAL IDEAL



## VII

### THE SOCIAL IDEAL

**T**HAT the normal is the ideal is a very simple discovery, and, like many other simple and all but axiomatic propositions, it has far-reaching consequences. We are concerned only with its bearings in social work. Influencing our choice of ends for which to work, giving us a new and fine inspiration, and affording a test of the value of our results, the principle that our goal is a normal community has greater significance than has yet been appreciated.

The degenerate and the genius are, to be sure, interesting pathological objects of investigation for specialists. The one should be restrained and cared for, and the other should have reasonable scope for his extraordinary gifts, possibly needing

## SOCIAL

also a modicum of care and restraint if the direction of his genius should chance to be anti-social. Social workers and philanthropists, however, who set out deliberately to benefit their fellows, to promote the common welfare, to prevent needless suffering and waste of human life, and who wish to accomplish as much as possible with the resources and energy at their disposal, may well find a more attractive and more useful field of endeavor in helping to secure the recognition of normal standards of comfort, normal standards of activity, normal standards of life, and to sweep away the obstacles which prevent the realization of these standards by ordinary human beings.

This is our social ideal. It may not seem sufficiently lofty for those who think of themselves as idealists. We fear that it may be too radical for some others who think of themselves as unsentimental, practical persons. Yet it is offered in no compromising spirit. Radical or conservative as it may seem according to the point of view, we do not see that it need alarm any sensible and open-minded person who is willing to confess

## FORCES

that it is his ambition to be a good citizen and a good neighbor, nor that it will fail to satisfy any of our more utopian co-workers for the time being, if they have any place in their philosophy for a practical working program of social betterment.

To secure the recognition of present standards, and to remove the obstacles which prevent whole groups in the community from realizing those standards in their lives, is, then, the twofold task in which practical citizens and philanthropists of inner vision may unite. In this task there is obviously a place for scientific research and educational propaganda on the one hand, and on the other for such environmental improvements, whether by the state or by private enterprise, as will make it possible for children to develop normally and for men and women of ordinary intelligence and efficiency to lead normal lives. Insurance, mutual aid schemes of various kinds, sanitation, and charitable relief are typical instances of methods by which such environmental changes are produced. We must know what is now possible and practicable; we must diffuse

this knowledge to the utmost extent; and we must remove the barriers, whether deliberately erected by greed and injustice or remaining because of indifference and neglect, which keep well-intentioned and physically well-endowed workingmen and their families from entering into the full enjoyment of these things which have been found to be reasonable and practicable.

What more clarion call to service can be imagined than this summons to co-operate in securing for all men the right to share in the normal standards of their time? What more inspiring opportunity for students than the investigation which will enable us to say confidently: Our standards of living do not any longer allow this and the other deprivation, will not tolerate this and that hardship, however unavoidable they may have been in the past? What more obvious educational undertaking than the extension of an acquaintance with the results of such investigations, thus laying the foundations for that self-protection and self-help which are the only safe reliance in a democracy? The materials for scientific investigations of the

## FORCES

standard of living lie in the markets and in the homes of the people. They are not of the closet type of studies, though there is need enough for the brain that can discriminate and generalize.

Research and publicity, however effective and disinterested, do not complete the undertaking. Social work involves still another class of activities which are more apt to encounter opposition because they inevitably run athwart privilege and selfish business interests. The abolition of child labor, the restriction of the labor of women in certain industries, the regulation of dangerous trades, the maintenance of definite standards of habitation and of sanitation, the prohibition of poisonous foods and drugs, the taxation of franchise and monopoly privileges or their regulated sale in an open market so that socially created values may be shared equitably by the entire community, are illustrations of the methods by which in certain critical points normal standards must be enforced by legislation and the courts. The most convenient and telling opposition to all such righteous social endeavor is to hurl at its advocates the

## SOCIAL FORCES

question-begging epithet of socialism. Whether it belongs in the socialist program is a question which so far as we can see is of interest only to socialists. Our advocacy of such laws as we have enumerated has no socialist origin. It follows irresistibly from the most elementary acquaintance with our present day resources and conditions.

If families need no longer live in dark, damp, unsanitary, and indecent dwellings, if children of tender years need no longer work for wages, if infection need no longer creep unchallenged from room to room, from child to child, if incomes need no longer be inadequate to provide for the recognized necessities of life, then it follows with a logic that brooks no denial that everyone must speedily do what he can to put an end to indecent dwellings, child labor, infectious disease, and inadequate incomes. If our social work contributes to these ends and to such ends as these it will satisfy our loftiest ambitions and will meet every rational test imposed by the most hard-headed of practical men.

September 4, 1909

## **VIII**

### **PERVERSION OF INSTITUTIONS**



## VIII

### PERVERSION OF INSTITUTIONS

**H**OSPITALS of an earlier day, like prisons and other institutions in which people were crowded without proper safeguards, sometimes became centers of infection. Skilled medical attendance was provided, but good nursing, isolation rooms, and sanitary cleanliness were wanting. Then Florence Nightingale announced the clarifying doctrine that hospitals, whatever else they do, should not make people sick. From this negative but fruitful axiom there came as logical corollaries the essential conditions of a good hospital. The principle which redeemed the hospital is one which is capable of application to other institutions.

The most obvious analogy is that prisons should not make criminals. There is much evidence of

## SOCIAL

the need for applying this negative but elementary doctrine. Prisons and jails which receive convicts for brief, definite sentences, permitting association of young offenders with hardened criminals, giving no reformatory or educational discipline, earn the reproach of the insanitary hospital. They pervert the very principle of their existence. They spread the infection of crime, even as the perverted hospital spreads the infection of disease. The reformatory has its legitimate and necessary place in the penal system. So has the colony in which, as in a hospital for the insane, incorrigible enemies of society may be permanently isolated. But the prison which represents merely the idea of vengeance and punishment is hard put to it to justify its existence at all. And when it makes criminals of its inmates the balance against it becomes indeed grievously heavy.

The police system should not create hostility towards the representatives of law and order. The police drag-net, which on the assassination of a police officer brings into court innocent and

## FORCES

law-abiding laborers, is calculated to produce just such an effect. Needless clubbing and other brutality have this result. This attitude of hostility is natural for the small merchant who is not protected against criminal blackmail, and for the Italian laborer who, in despair of such police protection as he has enjoyed in his own country, arms himself with knife or revolver, only to find that this is more certain to be punished than the "black-hand" outrage against which it was intended to be a protection. Unjustified arrest, third-degree torture, protection of criminals for pay, and other perversions of the police power, are on a par with the crime-making prison, and the insanitary, disease-breeding hospital.

Charity should not make paupers. Here again we have an application of our general principle that should prove very useful in testing the value of the work of charitable societies, and the wisdom of the practices and policies of individuals who think themselves charitable. Strength and not comfort is the end which we should rank highest among the good things which we covet for those

who look to us for help. Charity is to relieve distress, as the police system is to prevent crime, but it is equally essential that it should guard effectively against the perversion of its function. It must not itself multiply the occasions for its exercise.

Industry should not make workers unemployable. Here is opened up an exceedingly interesting field of speculation. Excessive hours of labor, underpay, irregular employment, throwing men out of employment as a first resort in periods of business retrenchment, displacing workers at the first sign of advancing age by young men because of their extra strength and pliability, are among the features of industry which may be regarded not unfairly as perversions of its natural function. They tend to make men unemployable, which is the very destruction of industry. Goods must be produced, and transported, and placed on the market, and sold, but all this should be done in such a way as to conserve the usefulness of those who do the work, not in such a way as to destroy their usefulness.

## FORCES

The school should not make its pupils inefficient. The function of education is to pass on to the growing generation the accumulated achievements of the race. Its aim is to put the next generation on the shoulders of the present, both in respect to earning and producing capacity, and in respect to powers of enjoyment. The life for which children are to be prepared is one of work and of leisure. They should be made efficient in both. The school which makes misfits, either vocational or simply as living, rational human beings, compelled daily to choose between good and evil, and between the good and the better, belongs with the hospital, the prison, the police system, and the charity, which miss their natural calling. The school, whatever else it does, should not make misfits. This is not the whole philosophy of education, but it is a good beginning of it. The axiom which is so useful when applied to other institutions, will at least help us determine whether a given school system is failing to meet the most elementary and fundamental of all tests, whether it is perverting its function

## SOCIAL FORCES

whether it is producing inefficiency instead of strength.

Churches should not create an indifference to religion. Missions should not make bread lines. Recreation should not devitalize. Politics should not undermine good citizenship. Retail trade should not result in the exploitation of consumers. Child-saving agencies should not exhibit an excessive mortality.

The perversion of social institutions is oftener than not the result of thoughtless or indifferent direction. Those who ultimately pay the bills for their creation and maintenance have no desire that hospitals shall make people sick, or that prisons shall make criminals, or that charity shall make paupers, or that factories shall make workmen unemployable. But to prevent the perversion something more is necessary than the absence of such a desire.

April 3, 1909

## **IX**

**FOR THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY**



## IX

### FOR THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY

**T**HE program of the Charity Organization Society is one of faith and of action—one which we have been working out slowly and carefully in this quarter of a century. It is a program for the present and for the future rather than a voice from the past. Recognizing that the greatest single obstacle to the performance of present and future duty is the bad inheritance of environment and of evil tradition which along with the good has come down to us from the past, the Society is willing to challenge every tradition which cannot give a good account of itself under present conditions, and is willing to change every aspect of our present material environment which is found to be destructive of character.

## SOCIAL

First of all we insist upon the hatefulness of poverty. We are no longer philosophical about it—if by that is meant tolerant to the point of indifference. The very existence among us of a class who rely upon the taxpayer and the charity of their neighbor for the supply of the necessities of life is itself a denial of human brotherhood, an indication in so far of the failure of our civilization. Poverty as a permanent social phenomenon, perpetuated from generation to generation in the midst of progress, is not to be accepted because it has been, but is to be recognized as a shocking, loathsome excrescence on the body politic, an intolerable evil which should come to an end. If there are still those, as John Stuart Mill said a century ago, who would secretly be not a little displeased if there were no more need for their charitable institutions, they are not taking part in the deliberations of the Charity Organization Society or shaping its policies. Both in the individual case as we deal with it, and in the community at large as we try to take our part in it, we look for nothing less than the elimination of

## FORCES

dependency, the conquest of poverty, the realization of a normal standard of living for every family as the only ideal, as the natural goal of all our efforts. The state of dependence, so far from being natural and right, appears to us to be an outrage upon childhood, an insult to womanhood, a menace to the very manhood of the nation.

Having this feeling about the fact of poverty, and facing thus towards the eastern horizon, it is natural to inquire what signs of promise and of danger are to be discerned. Among the signs of promise are the lessening importance of industrial causes, fewer applications being received from those who are out of work, or insufficiently employed or under-paid, and who have no other cause for need; and the diminishing importance of alcoholism, vice, dishonesty, and other personal causes of poverty and degeneracy. The moral standards of the community are rising. The day of the saloon in politics and in social life has passed its meridian. The tradition which many hold that the condition of poverty is ordinarily and as a matter of course to be explained

## SOCIAL

by personal faults of the poor themselves is no longer tenable. Strong drink and vice are abnormal, unnatural, and essentially unattractive ways of spending surplus income. They will yield, they are yielding, to normal, healthy, attractive amusements when these are presented as alternatives.

There are, however, unfavorable indications. In the next quarter of a century we shall see, here within the limits of the city of New York, increased congestion of population. That which we have seen on the lower east side and the lower west side, and in other spots of Manhattan, will extend over nearly the whole of the island. This is one of the two great evils with which we have to deal. The other is overwork. This, it is true, is but one form of a larger phenomenon, all of whose varying forms are ominous. Long hours of work are but a form of exploitation; and exploitation of every form, whether of employes by employer or of the needs of consumers by parasitic middlemen, is a destructive and unendurable social evil.

Long hours of unremitting, hopeless, and ill-

## FORCES

requited toil are still, in spite of inventions, in spite of the growth of capital, in spite of better industrial organization, in spite of trade unions, in spite of protective legislation, a terrible fact of modern industry. Long hours of hard physical labor are no longer a necessary condition of any industry. There is nothing worth producing that cannot be produced and brought to market under reasonable conditions. Being unnecessary and being destructive of human life, long hours are but a form of exploitation by which one man profits to another's irreparable and uncompensated injury.

Undoubtedly a few generations ago some people worked harder and for longer hours than now, but owing to the growth of our manufacturing industries and of transportation and their dependent occupations a very much larger proportion are now so employed as to make it possible for them to be overworked, and women and children are in relatively larger numbers among them. Aside, therefore, from industrial accidents, aside from abnormal rents and extortionate retail prices, aside

## SOCIAL FORCES

from adulterated foods and petty fraud of many kinds, aside from the various forms of exploitation and extortion from which the poor suffer as never before, overwork remains certainly on a large scale, and I fear in increasing seriousness, the one great overshadowing injury of the present day, worthy to be compared on the industrial side with congestion on the social side.

If the strong men of the community, the men of wealth and of influence, will take the leadership which naturally belongs to them in dealing with congestion and overwork, if they will become responsible for writing into the law and court decisions an appropriate expression of brotherhood in its relation to these two great evils, if they will establish with reference to these two evils appropriate standards of public conscience and business ethics, then we may safely leave to what are ordinarily called organized charities in the narrower sense all that remains of the problem of dependence in the city of New York.

November 30, 1907

X

A NEW VIEW OF POVERTY



## X

### A NEW VIEW OF POVERTY

**F**ORMERLY workers among the poor had such a horror of poverty, knowing from experience that it is an evil, that they placed great emphasis on thrift, and for this over-emphasis they have received many a hard rap from radical reformers. Now comes, however, Bernard Shaw, whose dislike of poverty exceeds even his dislike of sin, suffering, greed, priest-craft, king-craft, demagoguery, monopoly, ignorance, drink, war, and pestilence. All these are but scape-goats which reformers sacrifice. The real evil to be attacked is simply poverty, and the crying need of the nation is not for better morals, etc., but simply for enough money.

To be sure the method by which the essayist

would attack poverty and insure enough money differs from that inculcated by organized charity. It is more direct and cheerful. It involves no long and tedious process of hard work, discipline, and self-denial. It dismisses as half-way measures, which "may conceivably grow to something valuable," the institution of a Legal Minimum Wage and Old Age Pension. There is a better plan. Crudely and concretely stated the suggestion is that every adult with an income of less than five dollars a day shall be painlessly but inexorably killed, and every hungry, half-naked child forcibly fattened and clothed. Stating the plan more generally, as a permanent policy for the future, what is proposed is a system of universal pensions for life, that is, to give every man enough to live well on, so as to guarantee the community against the possibility of a case of the malignant disease of poverty, and then (necessarily) to see that he earned it.

Neither in the essay which he entitles *First Aid to Critics* nor in *Major Barbara*, the play to which it is prefixed, has Bernard Shaw, with all his

## FORCES

capacity for vigorous, not to say violent, statement, been able to over-state the evil of poverty. Nor has he lashed with undue severity "the stupid levity with which we tolerate poverty, as if it were either a wholesome tonic for lazy people or else a virtue to be embraced as St. Francis embraced it."

Here is his statement:

If a man is indolent, let him be poor. If he is drunken, let him be poor. If he is not a gentleman, let him be poor. If he is addicted to the fine arts or to pure science instead of to trade and finance, let him be poor. If he chooses to spend his urban eighteen shillings a week or his agricultural thirteen shillings a week on his beer and his family instead of saving it up for his old age, let him be poor. Let nothing be done for "the undeserving." Let him be poor. Serve him right!

Now, what does this "Let Him Be Poor" mean? It means let him be weak. Let him be ignorant. Let him become a nucleus of disease. Let him be a standing exhibition and example of ugliness and dirt. Let him

## SOCIAL

have rickety children. Let him be cheap and let him drag his fellows down by selling himself to do their work. Let his habitations turn our cities into poisonous congeries of slums. Let his daughters infect our young men with the diseases of the streets and his sons revenge him by turning the nation's manhood into scrofula, cowardice, cruelty, hypocrisy, political imbecility, and all the other fruits of oppression and malnutrition. Let the undeserving become still less deserving; and let the deserving lay up for himself, not treasures in heaven, but horrors in hell upon earth. This being so, is it really wise to let him be poor? Would he not do ten times less harm as a prosperous burglar, incendiary, ravisher, or murderer, to the utmost limits of humanity's comparatively negligible impulses in these directions?

We may also recall in this connection the prediction in Professor Patten's *New Basis of Civilization*:

Our children's children may learn with amazement how we thought it a natural social

## FORCES

phenomenon that men should die in their prime, leaving wives and children in terror of want; that accidents should make an army of maimed dependents; that there should not be enough houses for workers; and that epidemics should sweep away multitudes as autumn frost sweeps away summer insects. They will wonder that the universal sadness of such a world should have appealed to our transient sympathies but did not absorb our widest interests. They will ask why there was some hope of succor for those whose miseries passed for a moment before the eyes of the tender-hearted, but none for the dwellers beyond the narrow horizon within which pity moves. And they will be unable to put themselves in our places, because the new social philosophy which we are this moment framing will have so moulded their minds that they cannot return to the philosophy that moulds ours.

Now the language used in these two quotations would be extreme if the poverty which the social philosophers denounce were the result of limited resources or of external causes not subject to

## SOCIAL

social control. The sting of modern poverty in prosperous communities is precisely that it is not necessary, that it is the result of social neglect, of industrial exploitation, of maladministration in government, of an obsolete system of education, of our failure to adopt plans which already at least in fragmentary and local ways have shown their usefulness to correct particular evils.

There is no one evil to be called poverty and abolished by act of the legislature. What enemy of poverty and of all the evils associated with it would not be glad to be convinced that poverty could be abolished at a single blow? There is indeed involved a bold inversion of cause and effect in the plan of giving to every man an income for life and then seeing that he earns it. The old-fashioned workers among the poor are on safer ground in insisting that it must be earned first. The new prophets, however, are right in declaring that poverty can be abolished and that permanent progress cannot be made until it is. It will not be done by a decree, but the process will require as much of courage, of clear-sighted

## FORCES

audacity, of unflinching determination, as any program that ever was devised. It is a step ahead to gain the new view of poverty as a vulnerable, conquerable, and despicable enemy of the race. It is well to disassociate poverty from the poor.

The present writer was once described as one who knew poverty but did not know the poor. There is more of truth in the censure than in the praise. Where others succeed in finding class and group peculiarities, permanent and inalienable characteristics, I have found, among the large number of the least income and of no income, only men and women and their children, differing among themselves in infinite variety, and forming neither group nor class to be broadly distinguished, otherwise than by their lack of income, from the prosperous and well-to-do. Individuals certainly are lacking in qualities which rich individuals also often lack, and the consequences for the poor are more obvious and even sometimes fatal. It is, therefore, essential for the friend of the poor to strive to implant and cultivate qualities which may appear to him less attractive than other qualities,

## SOCIAL

since their absence has so vital a relation to that economic success which is lacking. But there is no descriptive phrase which we would dare to apply to the poor as a whole with any assurance that it would adequately describe their poverty or differentiate them in any fundamental sense from humanity at large. We may know poor persons, like or dislike them, approve or disapprove of their actions, reprove, warn, encourage, help, or despair of them, as our experience with individuals and our natural disposition may lead us. But to claim to know the poor in any complete or definitive sense seems presumptuous.

It is otherwise with poverty. As human beings living in communities in which poverty exists, it is our business to know it, and to know it well. In the sense in which modern writers use the term, and in the sense in which we consider it essential that poverty shall be understood, it is not merely a relative term indicating more or less of the world's goods; it is not a virtue voluntarily to be embraced; it is not a means of discipline for lazy and shiftless persons. It is a positive

## FORCES

condition tolerated only because of stupidity, neglect, and greed. It denotes the absence of the essential conditions of normal living. It is an excrescence, and not, as even reformers frequently imply, the necessary basis of modern industry. Congestion of population, the employment of children, and the presence of surplus unemployed labor may indeed be conditions from which certain incomes, or substantial portions of certain incomes, are at present derived, and such conditions are intimately associated with poverty; but they are not essential conditions of any legitimate industry. The common good demands inexorably that such incomes be cut off or reduced to a point compatible with a normal standard of living for every worker's family.

The new view of poverty is that it is an evil—a remediable evil; that its cure demands numerous social readjustments, but also the development of defective personality, the release of stores of human energy by the supply of new motives and the development of thrift—by which, in the new view is meant not so much penuriousness as strength of

## SOCIAL FORCES

character. The responsibility of the individual for his own welfare remains, but the responsibility of the strong for righting injustice and creating reasonable conditions for the development of individual character grows immeasurably with the widening of knowledge and the development of the social conscience.

August 3, 1907

## **XI**

### **THE TREATMENT OF POVERTY**



## XI

### THE TREATMENT OF POVERTY

**F**OR those who go down into the depths of poverty there are conceivable three means of escape. The first and most honorable of these is self-help; the second and hardest is the taking of prudent advice; and the third and most often abused is relief. Each of these ways out of poverty has its sturdy advocates, who have misunderstood and misrepresented one another. They are not necessarily mutually exclusive routes, but may instead be only so many different stages of the one long upward journey.

Self-help is the best of sound doctrine for a society of equals. It is the surest and safest road. But blinded eyes do not find it with ease, weak hands cannot always push open the door

## SOCIAL

which leads into it, frail feet stumble in its rough places, human courage is now and then unequal to its hard demands. Self-help is a product of character rather than its source. It is a fair flower which blooms best in the rich soil of opportunity. It is a character which passes readily by inheritance from self-helping and offspring-helping ancestors. It is a spiritual heritage, very precious, and easily destroyed when hope is gone, and fear and hate have become constant companions.

When the door of self-help is closed there is sometimes a way out through relief. It is the modern habit to minimize the efficacy of material relief, and its limitations are indeed very distinct; yet sometimes all that is required is that the burden be temporarily lifted. Native latent springs of energy are released by the removal of an obstacle which was beyond the strength of the poor man in his poverty. It would be instructive for charitable societies to inquire how often the improvement over which they rejoice has taken place, not as a result of expert treatment, not through any aid in finding work, not through the

## FORCES

uplifting influence of a superior mind, but solely through the recuperative power which the individual displays when a chance is given. Poverty of character, which is named in an annual report as a more serious detriment to the poor than their lack of material resources, is not a general characteristic of the poor. There are no general bad characteristics of the poor,—neither shiftlessness, nor intemperance, nor criminal inclination, nor even a preference for squalor. Until the conception that the poor are of peculiar clay is abandoned no understanding of poverty is possible. Sometimes, then, when there is no inherent poverty of character, relief is the path into that same excellent highway of self-help which others on their own account find it so profitable to explore.

And some, finally, have no sufficient capacity for self-help, even though their initial obstacles be swept away. Not only must their burden be lifted; new strength must be given them. They may need relief, but they also need treatment. It is because there are many of whom this is true that the controversies about material relief have

arisen. If an easy division of all the dependent poor into the two classes of those who need help and those who can help themselves were possible, and if those who belong in the first class needed nothing but money, the problem of charity would be reduced to simple proportions. It is far otherwise. All its difficulties center in the treatment which is sometimes a supplement to relief, sometimes a substitute for it, sometimes only a means of inducing self-help, or making it possible.

Wherein, the inexperienced, puzzled person of a naïve charitable inclination may well ask, does this treatment consist? Giving I know, and the hardening of the heart to refuse to give I know. Throwing people on their own resources and lecturing them for their shortcomings is intelligible. But what do you mean by treatment?

Is it not clear that the first step in that treatment of poverty which is the necessary supplement to self-help and relief is the imparting of faith in the possibility of recovery; the implanting of courage where it has failed; the suggestion of new strength to replenish the springs of character? The editor

## FORCES

of a metropolitan journal remarks that the doctor who has ripened in experience and wisdom is the finest type of humanity. You go to him in trouble, and he straightens you out. A lawyer is too busy, and a clergyman too conscious of your shortcomings, but the doctor deals tenderly and directly with your troubles. Of course this is a libel on two of the professions, but they may suffer for the moment for the sake of the vital point of our illustration. The social worker among the poor has no more imperative obligation than the awakening of confidence, the inspiration of hope, the restoration of a sense of the possibility of recovering all that is lost, and of getting on in a world of self-respecting, self-dependent, and successful members of the community. The visitor has many means of accomplishing these results, but among them all none is more directly valuable than the manner of approach, the personality of the man or woman who is responsible for the treatment. Confidence begets confidence. The expectation of good results helps to insure them. When poverty is functional rather than organic, every-

## SOCIAL

thing depends upon the manner in which it is treated. If it is organic, as physicians say of a disease which requires a readjustment of matter and tissue, then relief and treatment must be skilfully combined. If it is functional, that is to say, if there is no tangible, visible reason for the lack of self support, but the stubborn fact of dependence is there—no less real than neurasthenia or functional paralysis—then relief may or may not be an appropriate feature of treatment, but treatment in some form is the sole hope of recovery in so far as external interference is concerned.

Aid in securing employment, removal to a new location, reconciliation of estranged relatives, provision of educational advantages, the creation of new associations, opening the eyes to new possibilities, removal of irresistible temptations, the steady pressure of an unconquerable faith in a favorable outcome—all these are treatment. Exposure of imposture and refusal of relief and even criminal prosecution may be necessary features of treatment. These are treatment, however, not of poverty but of imposture and crime, and they are

## FORCES

not the primary task of the visitor in the homes of the poor. The supreme test of the friend of the poor is the power of gaining and holding their confidence, and enlisting their co-operation.

Partly through its effect on health, partly through its effect on personal habits, and partly through its direct effect on the making and carrying out of plans for earning a living, worry is one of the direct and all-pervading causes of economic dependence. It follows that the ideal visitor is one who can banish worry from the homes of the poor. It is quite true that worry is our most democratic institution, invading palace and cottage with fine impartiality; but the one most wearing and cankering form of worry, that which springs from anxiety about the actual necessities of life, for wife and children, for one's self in disease and in old age, and about the possibility of finding or holding that employment which is the means of livelihood—this is reserved for poverty and for those whom poverty stares in the face. There was an old view that in this state of things the chief duty of the friend of the poor is to incite

## SOCIAL FORCES

their apprehension for the future; to frighten them into thrift and economy; to teach them that of all evils they must most dread a pauper's grave, unprovided old age, and accident or illness without savings in the bank.

In other words, to make men worry about the future was the beginning of wisdom. The great Teacher was wiser than these teachers of the value of thrift. Even the counsel of perfection, "Take no thought for the morrow," fits many an anxious, care-burdened mother far better than the advice which she has too often received. Aside from the many who are really hysterical, and the extremely nervous, and the mentally unbalanced who come to grief because of a physical condition which demands medical treatment, the visitor will often find the secret of distress to be in peculiarities of temperament; in anxieties which are the more grievous because unshared; in domestic or business complications not at all impossible of solution when taken at the right end, with patience and sympathy and common sense.

September 7, 1907

## XII

### A PLEA FOR CHARITY



## XII

### A PLEA FOR CHARITY

**I**N every town and village there are men, women, and children who are in need of relief. It is scarcely necessary to present the evidence. If it were, every visitor of a charitable society, every settlement worker, missionary, district nurse, health inspector, policeman, and magistrate could testify. The need is not the spectacular but evanescent deprivation of San Francisco after the earthquake and fire, nor the abject squalor of East London, nor the appalling imminent starvation of Russia and China. It is well to emphasize that the needs which call continuously for charitable intervention in American cities and towns are not for a moment to be compared with any of these. Persons who are chari-

## SOCIAL

table only in the presence of a convulsion of nature, or at the thought of starving millions, are of no use in the presence of the more common and persistent and yet more varied and fascinating kinds of need which are encountered in the daily walks of the life of a modern social worker.

It is true, however, that in some of the case records there is a dramatic element not unlike that of sensational criminal trials which hold the attention and arouse the conscience, while also they disillusion the innocent, and probably pervert some whose minds are susceptible to this form of suggestion. Sin and guilt and heroic struggles to escape not only from their consequences but from their very power are by no means infrequent. One woman in particular arises in memory to teach again what heroism means. She is a widow with a little daughter just old enough, at the time when in her despair the mother asked for help, to begin to question the meaning of visits which for some years a man had made to her mother. The world has a very ugly name for her relationship to this man, and, though there were circum-

## FORCES

stances in palliation, the mother knew that they would not be sufficient to prevent her disgrace if the facts were to become known, and that in a year or two the child must inevitably come to a shameful knowledge of the source of their income. She had been too weak to break the guilty bonds on her own account, but she became strong for the sake of her child. The one condition of a new start which she felt to be absolutely essential was that it should not be financially aided by the man who had provided for her and with whom she must now break definitely and irrevocably.

She accomplished it, no matter precisely how. She has held her ground, not easily and not without help. She has supported herself and has repaid her loans. She has her reward in the freedom which she has won for herself and her child. How familiar the outlines of the story are in fiction! So familiar as to raise a doubt of its authenticity; yet a hard-working visitor has seen it unfold in this instance, through every stage of tragedy, and struggle, and danger of exposure, and doubt, and silent sympathy, and wise counsel,

to a prosaic, successful, and happy outcome. They two, the visitor and the woman, have worked it out together, no one else knowing more about it than was necessary to secure a loan or perfect some other essential detail. This woman of the great city, fighting her battle so nearly alone, surely deserved the charity which she received. Her mother instinct was her salvation, but the charity to which she appealed was the means by which she was enabled to act in accordance with that instinct under the complex and difficult conditions of life in the city. It meant money, sympathy, counsel, and service. For such charity there are every year a thousand calls to which there is no intelligent response.

This need for charity is not confined to those who are about to be dispossessed, to those who have no fuel, whose cupboards are bare, who are shivering for lack of shoes and clothing. It is rather an anomaly that it is too often necessary for such a crisis to arise before the underlying real need for charity is discovered. The crisis may be but an accident. A landlord happens to be less lenient

## FORCES

than heretofore. An unexpected illness temporarily cuts off income. A discouraged and irresponsible head of the family goes away. A conscientious teacher notices that a pupil appears undernourished and reports this to a charitable society. Or in any other of a score of ways, those who were already in sore need of charity become "applicants." The need was there before; the need is present in countless others who do not happen to meet with such a crisis, who are not "applicants." It may be a need for money, or it may be a need for better counsel, fuller information, training, warning, discipline, an opportunity for work, medical advice, a surgical operation, social intercourse—for any one or more of a thousand changes, slight enough in themselves, it may be, or so radical as an entire change of occupation or residence. The charity of the poor for each other—so often and so justly praised—seldom goes so far as really to meet these needs; and the charity of the rich for the poor does not so much as see them. There is no personal knowledge which might make the well-to-do realize these

## SOCIAL

opportunities for doing good, and there is no imagination which might enable them to discover them through the eyes of others.

The final, unpardonable, and unrecognized failure in the social fabric is the lack of charity. No improvement in the mechanical details of co-operation, no economy of funds now wasted in injudicious almsgiving, no repressive police measures directed towards mendicancy and imposture, will take the place of charity. Not even a determination that charity shall be restricted and surrounded by such conditions as seem likely to promote self-help and self-reliance will atone for the absence in the heart and in the minds of the people of that charity which suffereth long and is kind.

Whether in modern urban communities charity should take the form of a check sent the charity organization society, or that of residence and personal service in the tenements, may be, for any given individual, an open question. Doubtless some can do both. Everyone can do one or the other or can in some other way give practical

## FORCES

evidence that he has a feeling of personal responsibility for meeting the needs of his real neighbors. So much as this is involved in good citizenship. Those who do not share in any way in the charity of to-day are doing little, we may be sure, however much they may claim to be its especial champions, to bring nearer the justice of tomorrow.

April 6, 1907



### **XIII**

## **INCOME AND RELIEF MEASURES**



### XIII

#### INCOME AND RELIEF MEASURES

**U**NDERLYING and enfolding all other influences for good in human society are (1) those which favor the making of the home and the protection of childhood, and (2) those which insure the income. There is some danger that social workers and philanthropists, in their zeal for particular movements which fall within the first of these two groups of influences, may overlook the close relation between the two groups, i. e., between income and the ends which social workers have in view.

It is natural, when there is obvious distress, to found a relief society; when there are orphans, to found an asylum; when children are neglected because their mothers are at work, to found a day

nursery; when there is drunkenness, to found a temperance society; when there are deaths and injuries from industrial accidents, to found an insurance society; when there is tuberculosis, to organize an association for its prevention; when children are employed at a premature age and in injurious occupations, to create a child-labor committee; and when the waste from injudicious almsgiving and uncoördinated charitable efforts is realized, to create a charity organization society. These things are natural and they are right. The danger does not lie in founding and prosecuting these beneficent enterprises but in forgetting why they exist and in overlooking their limitations. If there is lack of necessary income, or if there is inefficiency in the expenditure of income, then there will be distress: sickness and accident, widowhood and orphanage for which there is no provision, child labor and woman labor which is destructive, and an unending and constantly augmenting demand for various kinds of relief measures.

Whether orphan asylums, free dispensaries, re-

## FORCES

lief societies, day nurseries, and other substitutes for normal home life and self-support from earned income, are to be condemned or justified depends upon the spirit in which they are conducted and the end for which they are in fact working. If they are allowed to crystallize into permanent institutions which enable employers to throw a definite part of their expense upon philanthropy; if, as a result of the existence of charitable institutions, men do in fact work for lower wages and women longer hours; if a relief fund becomes a substitute for compensation for injuries incident to the industry, then they are to be condemned. If, however, any charitable agency is contributing to the public knowledge concerning existing social facts, if it is honestly and persistently working for its own extinction and for the extinction of all present relief measures by the creation of conditions in which these particular forms of relief at least will be unnecessary, then it may be justified, and it may actually be earning that appreciation which an easy-going public is so apt to give to anything which calls itself charity.

## SOCIAL

It is reported that the managers of day nurseries have been urged to keep open later in the evening, because of the fact that the mothers of the children need to work later. We do not know whether women who patronize day nurseries are really required to work longer than formerly. It would be interesting to inquire. As they are not organized into trade unions, and are mainly not employed in factories subject to inspection, perhaps the managers of day nurseries are in better position than any others to make the inquiry. It is a fair test as to the class in which the nurseries belong. If they promptly acquiesce in the opportunity to "do a greater amount of good," make the greater need the basis for a new appeal for funds, and thus tacitly encourage the lengthening of hours, they are on the wrong side of the line. If, however, when they find that the facts warrant it, they sound emphatic warning; if they give proper aid and encouragement to some reasonable plan for counteracting the dangerous tendency; then, even though for the time being they do lengthen their hours to correspond to the de facto

## FORCES

working hours of the mothers, they will be on the right side.

A year or so ago there was much discussion of underfed children, and it was proposed that meals should be supplied in the schools. We have developed on a limited scale a system of school nurses, and on a larger scale, in several cities, a system of medical inspection in the schools, not merely to detect contagious disease, but also to discover any remediable physical defects. It is now seriously proposed that besides inspecting physicians and instructive nurses we should have as a definite part of the educational administrative system a sort of social secretary, a friendly visitor, or perhaps, if these are hackneyed terms, it will be more accurately descriptive to say, an educational scout. As to what the precise functions of this new member of the working force of the public school system are, there is as yet no agreement, but among the problems which have been suggested as falling within her province are those of the poverty of parents, intermittent attendance, employment of graduates, and the study of

## SOCIAL

industrial conditions in the community, with a view to effecting any necessary changes in the curriculum to adapt it to those conditions. There is an undoubted demand that the public school should become more vocational in character. How can this be accomplished if the making of the curriculum remains entirely in the hands of superintendent, principal, and teacher whose training, experience, and interests center exclusively in the class room? One superintendent says frankly that he is fitted to select teachers and to maintain general discipline, but that he is not fitted to observe developments and tendencies in the community outside the school or to reach conclusions as to what changes, if any, are needed to meet its demands.

It is easy to express impatience with such a confession, and many educators will doubtless be ready enough to declare that if the superintendent is not fit to do this he would better resign. We are not sure that the feeling which the superintendent expresses is by any means so rare as its frank expression, or that the remedy is resignation.

## FORCES

On the contrary the remedy may be precisely that which is suggested, the appointment, in the superintendent's office, or as a part of his staff, of the expert who will aid him in making the schools perform their social function, as the physician and nurse help him on the side of the physical needs of his pupils. Responsibility, under the boards of education, rests with the superintendents and teachers, but if they are overburdened, it may be that progress lies in further specialization, and that there is a place for those who, as a part of the educational system, will be primarily charged with the duty of constructive criticism, with the study of the present home life and of the prospective industrial life of the pupils, in order that the fruits of this study may be brought to bear upon present teaching in the schools. There are those who believe that these problems are so pre-eminently related to health and to physical defects that a moderate enlargement of the work of the instructive nurses would accomplish the object in view, and others who think that they are so related to regularity of attendance that an

## SOCIAL

increase in the number of attendance officers and the appointment of women to these positions would serve the purpose, while still others insist that teachers themselves should have time and inclination and ability to know all that the schools need to know about the home life of the pupils, and their probable future careers, and that no innovations are necessary except to reduce the average size of the classes and to train the teachers in sociological as well as pedagogical methods and principles.

We are not now concerned with conclusions on these interesting questions. We are concerned only with applying to them the same test which we have proposed as applicable to relief measures.

What is the end in view, in propositions for medical inspectors, school nurses, and visitors? Is it the making of self-reliant citizens, or the permanent establishment of some external device, some governmental mechanism, as a substitute for individual and parental responsibility? Are they to contribute to the weakness or to the strength of individuals? Are they to be experi-

## FORCES

mental in spirit or routine, educational or mechanical, radical or palliative? Are they to work for their own extinction through the gradual diffusion among all citizens of the very elementary knowledge, and the very modest sense of responsibility, the existence of which at the present time would make them unnecessary? It is on the answer to such questions as these that the justification for such extensions of the educational system as we have been considering depends.

An earnest and sincere desire for a knowledge of facts which are still unknown finds its natural complement in a democratic faith that, with such knowledge gained and disseminated among all men, efficient citizenship may justly be expected eventually to take the place of the emergency relief measures. No doubt there will be an opportunity on a higher plane for new experiment and new forms of relief, which will in turn deserve to be justified or condemned according as they make men more independent, self-reliant, and efficient—which does not of course in the least mean unsocial, uncoöperative, and selfish. The question with

## SOCIAL FORCES

which we started recurs: Would an assured income and reasonable efficiency in its expenditure make unnecessary these exceptional features of a school system, as they might make relief measures unnecessary, and if so, is it not of prime importance to find out how to bring an end to insufficiency and irregularity of income, and to those kinds of ignorance and inefficiency which prevent a right use of income?

February 12, 1907

## **XIV**

### **THE NAÏVE VIEW OF RELIEF**



## XIV

### THE NAÏVE VIEW OF RELIEF

**W**HEN a committee of a state conference of charities reports that in New York city at the present time a family of average size cannot live on less than seven hundred to eight hundred dollars a year, and maintain a "normal standard of living," it is a natural inference that the task of the charitable agencies is thereby wonderfully simplified, even though at the same time increased in magnitude. It is comparatively easy to find out the amount of the present income. With a definite standard set up by competent authority, all that remains is to make a mathematical calculation. If the total receipts are, let us say, four hundred and fifty dollars, and the family is normal, i. e., consists of father, mother,

## SOCIAL

and three small children, then it will take three hundred dollars to make up the required amount.

This interpretation of the duty of relief agencies, in the light of recent discussions concerning the standard of living, we venture to call the naïve view of relief; and we venture further, after, as in duty bound, pointing out its limitations, to plead for some recognition of its justice. Of course it is not so simple. No charity organization society can announce that it has adopted a standard of \$750 for the average family and that henceforth all incomes below that amount will be supplemented by such an allowance as will bring them up to this standard. Such a policy would tend not only to financial bankruptcy, but to a far more serious bankruptcy of character. It is quite true that the study and treatment of character is the basis of individual case work. It is towards the understanding and improvement of character that investigation is directed; it is to this end that district committees deliberate; and it is by this test, after long contact with the family which has applied for aid in distress, that

## FORCES

the result of investigation, relief, and treatment is to be judged. Perhaps, as a district visitor has expressed it, this function "should be described as our highest rather than as our most frequent aim, for the reason that there are many cases in which it seems difficult or impossible to accomplish any radical improvement in character, and we are apt to satisfy ourselves by merely meeting some immediate material need, or watching until some change takes place for the better, which seems to justify our withdrawal."

It follows that the naïve view cannot be accepted as a basis for action. A family may be temporarily below standard because of some need for discipline which only deprivation will supply. A family may be rapidly struggling towards a higher standard by means which will be sadly thwarted if outside allowances are thrust upon them. Undeveloped personal resources may remain undeveloped unless the incentive of fear, the imminent danger of physical suffering, remain. Professor William James has shown that all of us have hidden energies which unusual necessity alone calls forth.

## SOCIAL

This fresh "second wind," or third and fourth "wind," for Professor James finds layer after layer of these powers which ordinary people seldom if ever call into use, may be essential at the lowest economic stage, to enable the families to remain independent, and to enable them to make a successful start towards a higher level. It is quite possible that a liberal relief policy may have precisely the effect of inhibiting these powers, that to make up the deficiency in an income which at the moment is below standard may tide the family over the very obstacle which, if left to do its natural work, would call forth the next layer of energy, and awaken, it may be for life-long activity, some latent power which has heretofore remained latent merely because of the absence of sufficient incentive. Even when there is a real deficiency of income and no immediate possibility of making it good by any increase of effort, there may still be excellent reasons why a charitable society should not out of hand supply the lack.

The naïve view takes no account of these complications, of these "other things to be con-

## FORCES

sidered" which are so much in evidence before the perplexed visitor and the deliberating district committee. It is artless, unreflective. If, however, it is also genuine, unsophisticated, unadulterated by excessive fear of incidental consequences, may it not be expedient to come back to it, after all the "other things" have been duly considered, after all the incidental consequences have been duly taken into account? Is there not danger that our primary responsibility for dealing at first hand, and effectively, with the root of the trouble may be obscured by the attention which we feel constrained to give to the safeguards? The surgeon should have clean instruments and antiseptic bandages, but after all, if the case calls for an operation he must operate. The visitor must care above all about character as the surgeon cares about human life, but after all, if the trouble is lack of income, we must see that the income is supplied. To the extent of the available resources, and with all necessary safeguards of personal influence and proper incentives to self-help, a relief agency must make its relief adequate in

## SOCIAL FORCES

amount and appropriate in kind. The naïve view is to be preferred to a confused muddle in which a score of reasons are discovered for not doing the obvious thing and as a result of which there is neither an improvement of character nor relief of need.

November 23, 1907


**XV**

**ANOMALIES IN NEW YORK**



## XV

### ANOMALIES IN NEW YORK

CCORDING to Engel's "laws," workingmen's budgets normally show the following clearly marked tendencies in the items of expenditure:

Subsistence steadily decreases in proportion as incomes increase;

Rent remains nearly constant whatever the income;

Clothing also remains nearly constant;

Sundries (including expenditures for health, insurance, recreation, education and the like) increase with increased income.

These laws were based upon a very minute statistical analysis of a large number of individual budgets which had been collected by different people, in different countries and through a period of many years. They were intended to express

merely the facts disclosed by patient scrutiny of the actual budgets. We take it, however, that Engel's laws do in a very general way also satisfy our sense of justice and propriety. What is more natural than that as income increases, gradually, let us say, from six hundred to a thousand dollars a year, the family should occupy better dwellings, for which a constant percentage of the entire income, say twenty per cent or a little more, would have to be paid; that the expenditure for clothing, increasing in absolute amount with increased income, should bear about the same ratio to the entire budget; and that the expenditure for food, while increasing somewhat, should demand a constantly decreasing percentage of the whole, leaving a constantly larger proportion for all those "sundries" which are the real test of a rising standard of living? Accordingly, we are not surprised to find that when the United States Bureau of Labor a few years ago collected and analyzed some eleven thousand family budgets throughout the United States, the results, so far as general tendencies are concerned, were identical

## FORCES

with those reached by Engel in Europe. Here also rent is approximately a constant factor of the total expenditure, subsistence diminishes, clothing is constant or increases very slightly, and "sundries" increase rapidly, both in absolute amount and in percentage.

Two careful investigations of workingmen's budgets have been made in New York city within the past three years. Neither of these extends to so large a number of families as to insure absolutely that they are typical of the entire population with similar incomes, and neither of them is official. Nevertheless, they have covered so large a number of families and have been made under such auspices as to challenge attention, and their striking results are fully confirmed by general observation and experience.

One of these, made under the auspices of Greenwich House, extended to two hundred families on the lower West Side; the other, under the auspices of the New York State Conference of Charities and Correction, included in the actual analysis 391 families in all boroughs.

## SOCIAL

Now for the anomalies. It appears that in New York in incomes rising from six hundred to a thousand a year—

Rent is not a constant but a rapidly diminishing factor;

Food is not a diminishing but a constant factor;

Clothing is a slightly increasing factor;

Sundries increase as in Europe and elsewhere in the United States.

Why is rent a diminishing factor? There is only one true answer. It is because it is abnormally and outrageously high at the lower incomes. If this resulted merely in overcrowding it would be bad enough, but it results also in cutting down seriously the amount available for food. Overcrowding in these families does not cease at six hundred, or at seven hundred or eight hundred or nine hundred dollars a year. Rents rise slightly at these successive increases of income but lodgers increase in number, and it is not until incomes are well above a thousand dollars a year that there is real relief from overcrowding, according to the

## FORCES

very reasonable standard of one and a half persons to a room. At nine hundred or a thousand dollars the cost of shelter in New York begins to bear a normal percentage to income. For practically the whole range of workingmen's incomes it is abnormal, and it is most abnormal in the lower ranges of income.

Why does food remain a constant factor instead of diminishing as it does elsewhere, and as it would certainly seem that it should? The answer again lies at hand. Of those whose incomes are below six hundred dollars three-fourths are underfed. Even of those whose incomes are from six hundred to eight hundred one-third are underfed. This is not a mere inference from the face of the returns. An expert on food values examined the schedules, taking into account the articles of food actually purchased, the size and composition of the families, and the amount expended; and the percentage of underfeeding is based upon his expert opinion that in the conditions existing in these families there is underfeeding if less than twenty-two cents a day is expended for a male adult and a propor-

## SOCIAL FORCES

tionate, carefully calculated, smaller amount for wife and children.

The higher proportional rent is therefore paid by those whose incomes are eight hundred dollars or less not to escape overcrowding—that they do not escape—but in order that they may have shelter at all. The expenditures for food increase with income not to satisfy a higher standard or to secure a greater variety, but because below eight hundred dollars, unless the family is abnormally small, the management extraordinarily good, or the circumstances otherwise exceptional, there is not enough food for proper nourishment. There are minor differences by nationality, and by the district in which families live. Such differences are interesting but far less important than the large facts concerning which the two investigations are in substantial agreement: that high rents and overcrowding accompany inadequate expenditure for food and actual underfeeding in an alarmingly disproportionate number of all these families.

November 21, 1908

**XVI**

**THE PITTSBURGH SURVEY**



## XVI

### THE PITTSBURGH SURVEY

**T**HE Pittsburgh Survey represents an attempt to study family life in an industrial and urban community—to offer a structural exhibit of the community as a whole, although not without a more exhaustive investigation of some of its aspects. It deals with the wage-earning population, first in its industrial relations, and second in its relations to the community as a whole. The findings of the Survey in broad outline are these:

An altogether incredible amount of overwork by everybody, reaching its extreme in the twelve-hour shift for seven days in the week in the steel mills and the railway switchyards.

Low wages for the great majority of the laborers

employed by the mills, not lower than in other large cities, but low compared with the prices—so low as to be inadequate to the maintenance of a normal American standard of living; wages adjusted to the single man in the lodging house, not to the responsible head of a family.

Still lower wages for women, who receive for example in one of the metal trades, in which the proportion of women is great enough to be menacing, one-half as much as unorganized men in the same shops and one-third as much as the men in the union.

An absentee capitalism, with bad effects strikingly analogous to those of absentee landlordism, of which also Pittsburgh furnishes noteworthy examples.

A continuous inflow of immigrants with low standards, attracted by a wage which is high from the standpoint of southeastern Europe, and which yields a net pecuniary advantage because of abnormally low expenditures for food and shelter, and inadequate provision for the contingencies of sickness, accident and death.

The destruction of family life, not in any imaginary or mystical sense, but by the demands of the day's work, and by the very demonstrable

## FORCES

and material method of typhoid fever and industrial accidents; both preventable, but costing in single years in Pittsburgh considerably more than a thousand lives, and irretrievably shattering nearly as many homes.

Archaic social institutions such as the aldermanic court, the ward school district, the family garbage disposal, and the unregenerate charitable institution, still surviving after the conditions to which they were adapted have disappeared.

The contrast—which does not become blurred by familiarity with detail, but on the contrary becomes more vivid as the outlines are filled in—the contrast between the prosperity on the one hand of the most prosperous of all the communities of our western civilization, with its vast natural resources, the generous fostering of government, the human energy, the technical development, the gigantic tonnage of the mines and mills, the enormous capital of which the bank balances afford an indication; and, on the other hand, the neglect of life, of health, of physical vigor, even of the industrial efficiency of the individual.

Certainly no community before in America or Europe has ever had such a surplus, and never before has a great community applied what it had

## SOCIAL

so meagerly to the rational purposes of human life. Not by gifts of libraries, galleries, technical schools, and parks, but by the cessation of toil one day in seven and sixteen hours in the twenty-four, by the increase of wages, by the sparing of lives, by the prevention of accidents, and by raising the standards of domestic life, should the surplus come back to the people of the community in which it is created.

As we turn the typewritten pages of these reports, and as we get behind them to the cards of original memoranda on which they are based, and as we get behind them again to the deepest and most clearly defined impressions made in the year and a half on the minds of the members of the investigating staff, it is the first and the last of these findings that we feel more clearly than any others—the twelve hour day, and social neglect. Sunday work and night work are but another expression, as it were, of the same principle of long hours of overwork, of which the typical and persistent expression is the twelve-hour shift. Nothing else explains so much in the industrial

## FORCES

and social situation in the Pittsburgh district as the twelve-hour day—which is in fact, for half the year, the twelve-hour night. Everything else is keyed up to it. Foremen and superintendents, and ultimately directors and financiers, are subject to its law. There are no doubt bankers and teachers and bricklayers in Pittsburgh who work less, but the general law of the region is desperate, unremitting toil—extending in some large industries to twelve hours, for six days one week, and eight days the next. There is no seventh day save as it is stolen from sleep. There are of course occupations, as in the blast furnaces, in which there are long waits between the spurts of brief, intense expenditure of energy, but the general aspect of the working day is as I have described.

For the effect, as well as for the causes of the twelve-hour day, and for a more exact statement of its extent, its limitations, and the exceptions, we must go to the reports. The unadorned fact remains that in our most highly developed industrial community, where the two greatest individual fortunes in history have been made,

## SOCIAL

and where the foundations of the two most powerful business corporations have been laid, the mass of the workers in the master industry are driven as large numbers of laborers, whether slave or free, have scarcely before in human history been driven. I do not mean to suggest that the conditions of employment are less desirable than under a system of slavery. What I mean is merely that the inducement to a constantly increased output and a constant acceleration of pace is greater than has heretofore been devised. By a nice adjustment of piece wages and time wages, so that where the "boss" or "pusher" controls, time wages prevail, and where the individual worker controls, piece wages prevail; by the resistless operation of organized control at one point, and the effort to recover earnings reduced by skilful cuts of piece wages at another; by the danger of accident, and the lure of pay which seems high by old country standards, the pace is kept, is accelerated, and again maintained.

These adverse conditions are, it is true, conditions which naturally, or at least not infrequently,

## FORCES

accompany progress. They are incidents of the production of wealth on a vast scale. They are remediable whenever the community thinks it worth while to remedy them. If the hardships and misery which we find in Pittsburgh were due to poverty of resources, to the unproductivity of toil, then the process of overcoming them might indeed be tedious and discouraging. Since they are due to haste in acquiring wealth, to inequity in distribution, to the inadequacy of the mechanism of municipal government, they can be overcome rapidly if the community so desires.

There are many indications that the community is awakening to these adverse conditions and that it is even now ready to deal with some of them. An increasing number of citizens, city officials, officers of corporations, business men, social workers, and others, are entirely ready to enter with others and with one another on the dispassionate search for causes and remedies, recognizing that the adverse conditions are there, recognizing that distinction lies not in ostrich-like refusal to see them, but in statesmanlike willingness to

## SOCIAL FORCES

gauge them and to understand them, and so far as it is possible to remove them.

Pittsburgh is unique only in the extent to which tendencies which are observable everywhere have here actually, because of the high industrial development, and the great industrial activity, had the opportunity to give tangible proofs of their real character and their inevitable goal.

March 6, 1909. [American Economic Association and Sociological Society, Atlantic City, December, 1908.]

**XVII**

**THE BREAD LINE**



## XVII

### THE BREAD LINE

**I**N the morning mail are two letters demanding that something be done to eliminate that standing disgrace to the city, the long line of shivering men who, a little before midnight, stand in Broadway with the head of the line at the door of a well known bakery, waiting for bread. One of these letters makes a definite suggestion that to every man in the line there shall be given, besides the bread and coffee for which he has come, a ticket for a night's lodging and breakfast. The idea is that if you give the men lodging in addition to their late supper the line will disappear. It does not seem probable. We have yet to learn of any bread line, whether maintained by newspaper, mission, or bakery, that was so much as

## SOCIAL

shortened, to say nothing of elimination, by the method of increasing the largess. Alas for our human nature, or for the abnormal conditions under which we live, whichever you will, what would happen if bed and breakfast were added to the bread and coffee of the bread line is that the line would grow and not diminish, would become more and not less the shocking disgrace which it has long been. Moreover, it so happens that this particular bread line is an endowed institution. So well satisfied was its founder with the work of his hand, that on his death a few years ago he left a sum of money, the income of which is to be used in perpetuity to maintain it. No longer an emergency means of meeting exceptional distress, or merely a convenient method of disposing of surplus stale bread, it is to be reckoned a permanent factor among the city's institutions. Save by some not very probable application of the cy-pres doctrine by the courts, there it will stand forever under the shadow of Grace church, in the white light of Broadway, a symptom of our civilization, a stimulus to our pity, or a warn-

## FORCES

ing to our intelligence, according as we severally interpret its meaning.

Suppose, for a moment, laying aside sentimentality, we try to understand it in the light of other experiences and of experiment and observation with this particular group of men. First of all, it is not entirely unique. It happens to be conspicuous, but anywhere, at any hour of the night, in a city of four millions, any man who freely dispenses bread and coffee, or their equivalent in cash, whether from a cart tail, or from the altar, or from a bakeshop, or in the city's own lodging-house, will attract his scores and hundreds. If the distribution be continued long enough to be written up, as our famous bread line has been in numerous illustrated Sunday newspapers, and the news of it goes abroad in the land, it will inevitably be hundreds and not scores who will come. The mendicancy officer would recognize in the line his tramps, panhandlers, and vagrants; the judge would discover his thieves, pickpockets, and disorderly persons among them; hard working women in other cities would find that their de-

## SOCIAL

serting husbands, who are responsible for about one-tenth of the destitution of the cities, are lined up with the rest; lodging-house loafers, runaway boys, diseased and dissolute drunkards, unemployable men of every description, they are all there. It is no pleasure to use hard names. Not one is used in condemnation or reproach. But we must first of all understand, and what we must understand first of all is that the ills and grievances, the real misfortunes and hardships of the men in line are not to be cured by giving them bread and coffee or lodging and breakfast. Such means do not so much as touch the real trouble.

The very beginning of wisdom in dealing with the bread line is to stop the bread. These words are not written to express the views of those who are fond of finding reasons for doing nothing. Not once, but dozens of times, every man standing in the bread line has been invited, both by cordially spoken word and by printed card, to come to the Charities Building and tell his story, assured of a sympathetic hearing and a helping hand;

## FORCES

assured that meals and lodging, clothing, hospital care, transportation to his home, woodyard work, or whatever other help on a full knowledge of the facts was found to be appropriate, would be given, assured that relief would be provided pending any necessary inquiries. Every expectation reasonably created by these invitations has been completely met. Very few, however, have desired any such consideration. They certainly cannot be helped without knowledge of their character, careers, plans, and prospects, and this information they show no intention of giving. Why should they? Here is one meal and it is but one of a cycle of which the informed rounder may take advantage as his needs and inclinations suggest.

It is the fashion in illustrated newspaper articles to describe the bread line as an escape valve of threatening misery and revolt. It is more profitable to regard it simply as one of our numerous temptations and aids to pauperism, all of which are materially strengthened in their vicious influence by the virtually unrestricted license to

## SOCIAL FORCES

beg. An opportunity to live from the proceeds of mendicancy involves inevitably increased temptation and opportunity to steal and blackmail. The records of burglaries in New York show the natural results. As if in travesty of an effective police system of dealing with mendicants it is reported that mounted police in the residence districts of the wealthy have been instructed to see that citizens are not annoyed by them.

The remedy for the bread line is not more bread or other gratuities, but better police methods, the establishment of a state farm and industrial colony, with voluntary and compulsory departments, the discontinuance of indiscriminate doles of every description, and the prompt and adequate relief of genuine distress, by competent and experienced experts, on the basis of personal consideration for the individual in trouble.

March 7, 1908

## **XVIII**

### **AN EARLY SOCIAL ECONOMIST**



## XVIII

### AN EARLY SOCIAL ECONOMIST

**T**HERE were social reformers before Theodore Roosevelt, and, although some of them have been constitutional lawyers and valiant upholders of existing institutions, they have perhaps oftener been what may be called constructive statesmen and iconoclastic reformers.

Such an one reigned in England in the stirring time when Norman kings gave way to the Plantagenets. William the Conqueror himself had been enough of a social economist to create the Domesday Book, the first English census, in which social considerations are so conspicuous; but his great-grandson, the first of the Plantagenets, becoming king at an age when he would now in America have become a voter, remaining in office for five

and thirty years, and having an extraordinary fund of energy, administrative ability, and constructive imagination, and the utmost readiness to seek the common good in almost reckless disregard of established institutions and precedents, thinking always of how to accomplish the result and very little of the methods and limitations imposed or recognized by his ancestors, becomes a veritable prototype of the modern radical reformer.

From Henry's administration comes the grand jury almost in its present form. From his development of the king's court and his sending of the justices en eyrie comes the modern right of appeal. From his determined assertion of the supremacy of the king's courts and his insistence upon dealing immediately in the civil courts with those whom the ecclesiastical court had convicted comes our veneration for the supreme law of the land, as determined by constituted judicial authority.

Of course Henry II made no real break with England's past. That was not the way of ancient

## FORCES

England, nor is it the way of those who have sprung from the loins of ancient England—the United States, modern England, and the British colonies; but it is interesting to speculate what would have happened to the grand jury or the right of appeal in Henry's day if, instead of being instruments of progress, they had, like the trial by ordeal or the conflicting jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts, been serious obstacles to what was believed to be the general good.

The interesting conflict at Runnymede, in the ill-starred reign of Henry's son, affords another excellent illustration of a similar contrast. It is stipulated in Magna Charta that men shall not be punished for slight offenses except in accordance with the magnitude of their offenses, and also, however, that they shall be punished for grave offenses in accordance with the gravity of their crimes. No doubt the establishment of this principle is to be regarded as a landmark in the history of English liberty. No doubt there are some millions of subjects in Russia at the present moment who would regard a similar guarantee

as the greatest boon of which they could conceive. As contrasted with arbitrary punishments which have no relation to the gravity of the offense committed, the protection afforded by this clause in Magna Charta is of incalculable value.

At the present time, however, both in England and in America the established practice of attempting to fix graduated punishments to fit particular offenses, slight and serious, according to the gravity of the offenses, represents all that is archaic and futile and indefensible in our system of criminal jurisprudence.

The punishment of crimes may be effected by awarding fixed penalties on a prescribed scale nicely adjusted to every conceivable criminal action; but it is not by such a method that society prevents crime, deals successfully with youthful offenders, or secures the reformation of habitual criminals. By a long and tedious process we are substituting reformatories for prisons, indeterminate for fixed sentences, probation and suspended sentence for the incarceration of first offenders, and are making many other changes

## FORCES

of which the final effect is to displace the whole conception of a society which punishes crime by that of a society determined—through education, through changes in environment, through reformatory methods—to prevent crime; to restore to a normal place those who are or may become normal; and to segregate permanently from society those who remain incorrigible.

What the social economist in the twelfth or thirteenth century may have accomplished with infinite labor and clear insight, it may become the duty of the social economist of the twentieth century to discard. The spirit remains the same, but neither that which is merely sanctioned by usage, nor that which has merely the charm of novelty, prevails with the social economist against that which is for the common good. All things are to be tried, and we are to hold fast that which is good. We cannot decide whether a given way of doing things is good by inquiring whether our fathers found it good in the twelfth or in the nineteenth century. The lawyer may well be a social economist in spirit, and the social economist

## SOCIAL FORCES

may well appreciate the necessity for sound principles of legal interpretation, yet there will come to every reformer a time when he must choose whether at bottom and fundamentally he is concerned with the attempt to ascertain what has been and what is, or whether he is primarily concerned in deciding in his own mind what ought to be and will be. It is a rare reformer and an exceedingly good citizen that can do both.

March 2, 1907

## **XIX**

### **THE MAID OF ORLEANS: A SAINT OF THE CHURCH**



## XIX

### THE MAID OF ORLEANS: A SAINT OF THE CHURCH

We are lost—we have burned a saint.—An English soldier in 1431.

The one pure figure which rises out of the greed, the selfishness, the skepticism of the time.—John Richard Green.

Her heart was cast into the Seine, but it still beats in the pulse of Christendom.—Michael Kenny, S. J., in "America," a Catholic Review.

**P**ROTESTANT and dissenter may well give deep and silent approval in their hearts when the Church of Rome, by solemn pronouncement, in strict accordance with its ancient traditions, after due and formal scrutiny of all the evidence, beatifies the peasant maid of France, calling upon all its faithful children to do her reverence,

## SOCIAL

even as she herself did reverence five centuries ago to St. Michael, the Warrior Archangel, St. Margaret, and St. Catherine, whose voices gave her guidance in her village home, at the court of France, in the strategy of war, and at the stake.

In declaring this maid worthy of a place among the blessed saints, as having displayed in a heroic degree the virtues of faith and hope, charity and chastity, justice and fortitude, Pius X does but adopt and confirm the judgment of her contemporaries, friend and foe alike, and of those who since then have studied and pondered upon her strange and thrilling career.

How many excellent arguments could have been presented to her for remaining quietly in Domremy in that dark hour when the Voices bade her go crown the dauphin! She might have been told that it was an interesting and picturesque but impracticable mission. Orleans, the last remaining stronghold, was about to fall. It was not a French year. There were no precedents. If she failed, as of course she would, she would bring ridicule upon her family, and even discredit upon the

## FORCES

religion by whose mandate she professed to be about to act. Better undertake something reasonable and practical, like dressing the wounds of the straggling soldiers who were an all too familiar spectacle in the streets of her village. These soldiers, indeed, the girl had come to know very well. They had told her of things at the front. She had entered into the spirit of the great struggle in which they had had a part. The sword of an officer was sacred in her eyes, because over the fingers of the boy who had wielded it God himself had clasped His fingers; and who had fought for France had fought for Him. In Heaven itself was pity for the fair realm of France.

To Charles then, she would go, relying implicitly upon her inward vision, obeying in faith the Voices which spoke to her, using with consummate tact and unflinching good sense the instruments which were given her, good humoredly putting aside in the flesh the homage and veneration which soldiers and others would fain have shown her, and which are now at last, with authority, declared to be her due, transforming a rabble into an army, a

prince into a king, and a defeated and demoralized fragment of a people into a nation. All this she did. Every attempt to detract from the validity of the explanation which she herself gave of the sources of her strength but adds to the difficulty, already insurmountable, of accounting for her success. She was happy even in her persecution and martyrdom, for it is through these that the historical authenticity of the incidents of her life has been established beyond cavil, and her immortality in the hearts of men assured.

These are piping times of peace. Michael is not our patron saint. Peace advocates demand that even in our struggles against greed, injustice, and ignorance—which, alas, must continue for a time—we shall give up military metaphors; that we must think no more of Lucifer, as a foe to be overthrown, with angels and archangels as our allies. The voices of St. Margaret, whose name means the pearl, and of St. Catherine, whose name means purity, may however speak to us the more clearly if it be really true that the clash of war, in the literal sense of fraternal bloodshed,

## FORCES

is about to be silenced. Although Jeanne D'Arc is known in history as the warrior maid, obedience to the stern commands of St. Michael being her foremost duty as she saw it, she takes her place in the calendar as one who will forever speak of the power of purity, of the pearl of faith.

Her victories over the English are the negligible incident, the outward form of her mission. Her victories over her own compatriots, over their vices, their follies, their incompetence, their infidelity, are its essence. Singleness of purpose, simplicity of heart, unadulterated loyalty to her high purpose, power to discern the good in the hearts of her people, these were the unfailing sources of her power, as they are the sources of power and influence to this day.

In Ste. Jeanne's country the church which claims the right to crown "the matchless maid" by ceremonial in St. Peter's at Rome has fallen upon troublous times. The cynic may suspect that it is for this reason that this moment is chosen for the beatification of the patriot maiden. Even if it were so it would be difficult to imagine a

## SOCIAL FORCES

nobler or more irresistible concession to hostile sentiment. The free church will be stronger, if our American experience is of the slightest significance, than the church which was bound by obsolete treaties to the state. Even stripped of some of her material possessions and her treasured privileges, she may rise to a new influence and a higher spiritual authority. It is at least a most auspicious omen, that she has chosen at this time to exalt, as worthy of veneration, one whose triumphant power was deep rooted in those qualities of character to which all the world increasingly pays reverence.

May 1, 1909

**XX**

**THE RUSSELL SAGE FOUNDATION**



## XX

### THE RUSSELL SAGE FOUNDATION

**T**HE most nobly conceived benefaction of an age in which many benefactions have been generously conceived and executed is the Russell Sage Foundation for the improvement of working and living conditions. The breadth and wisdom of the gift are not the result of an easy-going desire to please a thousand advisers, though it would be difficult to see how in any other way the views of nearly all the countless correspondents who have proffered advice could have been so fully and satisfactorily met. It is not a choice of desperation resulting from exclusive consideration of the difficulties and objections to particular enterprises which have been suggested. It is obvious that Mrs. Sage's gift to the nation has its

origin in an ardent personal desire to do something consistent with the highest religious motive, something which would translate into modern social service the parable of the Good Samaritan, and that this craving, restrained to some extent, it may be, through many years, or finding expression only in smaller opportunities, has now been satisfied with nothing less than the most complete, thorough, and carefully planned program of social betterment which could be devised. It is no less obvious that the form which the gift has taken—that of an unrestricted mandate to seek out the causes of adverse conditions and to deal with them by whatever means from time to time are deemed advisable—is the result of careful study of other foundations, and a recognition of the manifold and shifting character of present and future adverse conditions.

The Russell Sage Foundation escapes the just criticism which economists for a century have urged against many bequests and endowments for religious, charitable, and even educational purposes—that they are rigid and narrow in their terms

## FORCES

and speedily cease to have any vital relation to existing needs, if indeed they have any such relation at the start. No particular neighborhood, no particular class of needy persons, no particular sect, or color, or social status is to hold an exclusive or favored place in the application of this fund. Even this catholicity is not stipulated in the bond. To insert in a deed of gift, or a charter like that of the Russell Sage Foundation, provisions like those of the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments, would be to limit its usefulness and probably to fail in accomplishing the result. Its catholicity rests upon a more sure and stable basis, the spirit in which the plan itself is conceived, and the character of the trustees who are chosen to inaugurate and administer the trust, to establish its traditions and precedents, to determine, probably, at least for a generation, the general directions in which its streams of beneficence will flow.

The magnitude of the endowment is no less thrilling than the faith and courage which have inspired the idea and determined the form in which it is embodied. Nearly half a million dollars may

be expected to be available from it each year. How many legitimate movements for social betterment but half supported, or appealing in vain for contributions, can be carried over a period of depression or threatened failure by the aid of grants from this foundation! How many enterprises, rich in the promise which they hold out to the poor of relief from privation, injustice, or exploitation, can be launched by its generous encouragement! No doubt there is an earlier and more imperative obligation on the trustees of the Russell Sage Foundation than either the subsidizing of existing charities or the starting of new philanthropies. Their first duty will be the investigation of existing social and living conditions. A study of occupations, of homes, of education, of congestion, of the cost of living, of the means of saving life, increasing physical vigor and industrial efficiency—and the making known of the results of such studies now in progress or already completed—these, we should think, will naturally be among the first tasks to which the trustees will address their attention. They

## FORCES

will doubtless find ready to their hand existing agencies with which they can profitably co-operate, in remedial work and in investigation.

It is a fortunate moment in many respects for the appearance of this ally of preventive social movements. Much is to be done, it is true, and that of itself is reason enough for congratulation to those who are supplied with the resources adequate to its accomplishment. But it is also true that there has been preparation. There are many to help to do what is necessary. Never was the spirit of co-operation so strong. Never was there so large a number of trained and competent workers. They are not all now engaged in philanthropic activities. They are on the newspapers, in colleges, and in business. They have, however, been thinking about social conditions and in some instances acting to change them. The Charities Building, the School of Philanthropy, and the Department of Social Economy in Columbia—to name only three illustrations of previous gifts—are typical of agencies which have contributed in many communities to a closer co-operation,

## SOCIAL FORCES

a fuller understanding of what remains to be done.

What we really have in the Russell Sage Foundation is a new and perhaps better type of university, an institution for research and education. Its beneficiaries are to be, however, not the five per cent or less of our population who now receive a college education, but the less privileged half of the ninety-five per cent, or more, who do not. Those who know best the magnitude and the urgency of our social problems are naturally the first to rejoice in this most notable of all the attempts thus far made to understand and ameliorate the conditions of life of those who bear the heaviest burdens.

March 23, 1907

**XXI**

**JOHN STEWART KENNEDY'S WILL**



## XXI

### JOHN STEWART KENNEDY'S WILL

**I**N a more literal sense than usual, the testamentary document to which John Stewart Kennedy subscribed his name on the March 26 before his death, deserves to be known as the expression of the will, of the strong, clearly defined, deliberate and seasoned judgment of the testator. In other words, the will is thoroughly characteristic of the man, consistent with the general tenor of his life, bearing to fruition plans which he had initiated long before.

His gifts of over thirty millions to religious, educational, philanthropic, and civic purposes represent no sudden whims, no desire for personal memorials, no freakish attempts at originality. The will creates no new institution, imposes no

new obligation on any institution except such as naturally accompanies enlarged resources, and contains practically no provision limiting the discretion of the trustees of institutions as to the manner in which the gifts shall be applied. Immense as the bequests are, they can be used for current expenses or for endowment, for the payment of salaries or for the erection of buildings, for the carrying on of existing activities or for the inauguration of new activities, in each case as the responsible directors or managers may think best. This noble confidence in the large number of institutions that are named as beneficiaries is not a mere blind and optimistic trust in charitable and religious agencies as such. Nothing could be further from the will of Mr. Kennedy as it has been known to his intimate friends.

His bequests are made after a sifting and searching process such as has scarcely been known heretofore—independent, judicial, sympathetic, with expert assistance, and yet from his personal point of view and to a large extent quite without the knowledge of the agencies under consideration.

## FORCES

At the same time, Mr. Kennedy makes it clear that he is disposing of his own property and has no hesitation in giving the preference to institutions of his own religious faith, to charitable enterprises in which he has been personally interested, to educational institutions of which he has had some personal knowledge, to public causes associated with his own home and with which he has been identified. His wife receives a large fortune, and if by any technicality his will should be declared void as to charitable bequests she is relied upon to carry out the intentions expressed in the will, in which there is every reason to infer that she fully concurs. His own and his wife's relatives, a few personal friends, and all of his employes and servants receive bequests, not indiscriminately but on a basis which is evidently carefully considered in each instance and adopted for good and sufficient reasons. In all this and in the preamble of the seventh article, which contains forty-six specific bequests to institutions, there is a fine and refreshing flavor of old-fashioned conservatism:

## SOCIAL

Having been greatly prospered in the business which I carried on for more than thirty years in this my adopted country, and being desirous of leaving some expression of my sympathy with its religious, charitable, benevolent and educational institutions, I give and bequeath out of the rest, residue and remainder of my estate, after payment in full of all the gifts mentioned in the foregoing articles of this my will, the following legacies.

After these and other specific bequests have been deducted there will remain an amount estimated at nearly \$50,000,000 which is to be divided into sixty-four equal parts, each representing approximately \$750,000. Sixteen of these parts go to Mrs. Kennedy, besides specific bequests enumerated earlier in the will; seventeen to relatives; leaving thirty-one of the sixty-four residual parts of the estate to be divided, in a manner which is precisely indicated, among fourteen institutions. Six of these, receiving in all thirteen of the sixty-four residual parts, are distinctly religious. Four are educational institutions, receiving seven parts: Columbia, University of

## FORCES

New York, Robert College in Constantinople, and the School of Philanthropy. The four others are the United Charities (the corporation which holds the United Charities Building in trust for the Charity Organization Society, the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, the Children's Aid Society, and the City Mission and Tract Society), receiving two parts; the Presbyterian Hospital, three parts; the New York Public Library, three parts; and the Metropolitan Art Museum, three parts.

In its freedom from arbitrary restrictions the will is in line with other recent benefactions, such as the endowment of the General Education Board and the Russell Sage Foundation, and it is all the more significant on that account. In the two instances named, complete discretion is left to a Board of Trustees selected by the donor in the carrying out of a purpose which is broadly formulated in the deed of gift. In the present instance the bequests are made to "going concerns," each with its own function and each now commissioned with a new mandate to go forward

## SOCIAL FORCES

more vigorously and more successfully in the prosecution of its worthy objects.

The will was drawn by Robert W. de Forest, who is also its executor in association with Mrs. Kennedy and two of Mr. Kennedy's nephews. The long intimacy between Mr. Kennedy and his legal adviser, and their well-known co-operation in many if not most of the causes which are represented among the beneficiaries, would suggest a participation in the making of these plans not unlike that which Mr. de Forest has taken in carrying Mrs. Sage's wishes into effect through the Russell Sage Foundation and otherwise. Whatever counsel he may have taken, there is no doubt that Mr. Kennedy's personal judgment is reflected in his remarkable will. Its real inspiration is faith in fellow men and in the divine providence, faith in the future, faith in the value and permanence of our institutions, faith in education, in literature and art, in charity, in missionary enterprise, in religion.

November 13, 1909


## XXII

### THE HUDSON-FULTON RECESSIONAL



## XXII

### THE HUDSON-FULTON RECESSIONAL

 NCE more far-called navies are melting away and the pageantry of a great celebration is fading from the brief memory of a community too much pre-occupied with serious present-day activities to dwell for long upon the events of the early seventeenth or early nineteenth centuries. By the expenditure of much energy and much money the affair has been made impressive enough to challenge the attention not only of the nation but even of the city itself. Not merely every school boy but nearly every business man and society woman knows now that the other name of North River is worthily bestowed upon a great contemporary of Rembrandt; and that Fulton Market, Fulton Ferry, Fulton street, and the practice of giving

## SOCIAL

to children at least middle names in honor of the great Fulton, are all memorials of another pioneer who before the close of Jefferson's administration had solved the problem of steam navigation on the water.

Decorations, illuminations, parades, banquets, and public meetings are on this occasion eminently justified by their fruits. The brief term at school will be good for us all. Teachers of history must have learned something in the course of the week about how to secure more effective visualization of the great epochs and events of the past. Teachers of economics have had their attention diverted from marginal to initial utilities, which can scarcely fail to prove most beneficial. Teachers of politics and government have had an object lesson in police administration. Teachers of art have had before their eyes for instruction and reproof the great Dutch masterpieces in the Metropolitan, and the lamentable evidences that in exterior house and street decoration Americans have yet much to learn.

Now that it is all over, two quiet voices from

## FORCES

the midst of the festivities of the past fortnight appear to us worthy of the tribute of an echo. No doubt in all the newspapers of the metropolis there were learned and creditable criticisms of the special exhibits in the Metropolitan Art Museum. One of them, however, the New York Press, in a series of remarkably able and direct editorials, struck the true recessional note, sending its readers to Rembrandt, not to admire his art, but to learn how to live. Think of it! Nearly forty portraits by the greatest interpreter of human life in a single museum. No European tourist has ever had such a golden treat, such an extraordinary opportunity. The chief concern of the directors of the museum has doubtless been that the collection could not be appreciated by any considerable proportion of its visitors. Technically and æsthetically this apprehension is doubtless well grounded, but what if the people go to the noble pictures, in humility and open-mindedness, and seek to learn what Rembrandt, the teacher, as a German writer calls him, has to say to them? What if they learn, though they may

## SOCIAL

not be able to put the lesson into words, something of their own inner life, through the revelation by Rembrandt of the inmost experience of the Rembrandts and other human beings whom he portrays? What if the city of New York and her guests take to heart the lessons of truth and sincerity and courage which the brilliant but mellow canvases borrowed by the directors of the museum from the private galleries of the wealthy are capable of teaching? Why, then, the city will become a better place in which to live. Social workers and citizens who strive for the common good will have increased sympathy and larger success. Religion and morality and education and art and philanthropy and all the higher and more substantial things of life will gain in the public esteem. Fortunately, this feature of the Hudson-Fulton Memorial did not disappear with the passing of the Half-Moon and the Clermont towards Albany. The pictures remained until December and could be seen at leisure, without price by any who could afford the journey to Central Park.

## FORCES

The second recessional note of the week is in a notable letter to the newspapers from the pen of that veteran of many campaigns for good causes, John Bigelow. His wrath is stirred because New York dares to make festival over the discovery of a river and bay whose waters are allowed to be polluted by sewage and factories. He summons the spirits of Fulton and Hudson to hold indignant communion over the dishonor of their splendid river. Plain spoken to the point of giving offense to good people, and severe in his reference to contemporaneous politicians, the author of this letter has, nevertheless, seized the psychological moment for saying the word over which there will be searchings of heart after the noise and illumination have ceased to distract us. What he says is fundamentally true, that the water of the river should be fit to drink and we should not be compelled to seek in the Catskills at enormous expense for the supply which nature has put at our doors. A failure in interurban and interstate co-operation and a failure in public control of private enterprises have brought us

## SOCIAL FORCES

to the condition which deserves the stinging rebuke.

Purify your river, and look at your masterpieces of art, are thus the two injunctions which seem to us to speak most clearly from the Hudson-Fulton memorial. They are a far cry from the thoughts which were probably uppermost in the minds of the two heroes in whose honor the fête was held. Other men are reminding us, by most striking coincidences, of the very qualities which they personified. The Wrights are the new Fultons, and Peary completes what Hudson sought. Discovery and invention are in no danger of failing either of honor or of disciples. Social order and reverence are not so obviously our special strength. From the very altars which we raise to the illustrious exponents of the one kind of gifts, we hear the quiet voices which remind us of the eternal value of the other kind.

October 9, 1909

## **XXIII**

### **THE NEED FOR A RELIGIOUS AWAKENING**



## XXIII

### THE NEED FOR A RELIGIOUS AWAKENING

**T**HE greatest social force in the world is the quickening influence of a high ideal. In his letter to the Hebrews Paul describes with a glow of enthusiasm the results of faith: faith through which the worlds were framed, through which all the great things recorded in sacred history were accomplished, through which a desire for a better country was created, through which they of olden times "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." If Paul is right in interpreting all human history, so far as

## SOCIAL

it has a continuing purpose, in the light of faith, and if all the great religious leaders are right in conceiving that the important thing for the church is to have a clear, tangible conception of the social ideal, then is it not our primary duty to try to formulate very simply the outlines of that society which on earth, in the United States of America, in our cities and towns, and on our farms, we would like to see established?

Here it is possible only to suggest certain negatives. Surely in an ideal community there will be no such thing as professional crime. It is the tradition in the churches to ascribe the existence of crime to the perversity of the individual, but the evidence is now complete and may be understood by any who will take the trouble to examine it that crime is largely a social product; that our penal system—courts, prisons, executions, fines, and short sentences—is administered in such a way as to encourage professional crime. The outlines of a new and better method are at hand: education, prevention, reformation, the careful segregation of hardened from new offend-

## FORCES

ers, probation, indeterminate sentence, rehabilitation, the elimination of politics, the selection of humane and competent public officials—they are all there, they have all been tested, their efficacy has been shown, but we are not using them. Politics are still in our prisons; the old discredited system of fixed terms of imprisonment without reformation is still our main reliance; and there is still no genuine social or religious spirit in our attitude toward the offender. This is still the situation in every state, and its natural products are lynch law, a failure to prosecute or the acquittal of notorious offenders, the making of criminals in penitentiaries and jails, and the increase of crime. If there is a new birth in the church, may it not be expected to show itself first of all in the treatment of the criminal?

The ideal community is certainly one, secondly, from which poverty will have disappeared. We cannot believe that those ancient sayings, "The poor shall not depart out of the land" and "The poor ye have always with you," were spoken as a curse or as a prophecy. Poverty in a relative

## SOCIAL

sense, meaning simply that all desires have not been satisfied, is a very healthy and desirable condition. It is essential that we should all have something left to strive for. But poverty in the absolute sense of deprivation of the physical necessities of life—this has become unendurable, not only to the individuals who suffer, but to the community of which they are a part. If there is a new birth in the church, it will deal with poverty, not alone through deacons' alms and orphan asylums, though these have their place, but by developing throughout the membership of the church the ideal of a Christian community from which chronic poverty, like professional crime, will have disappeared.

It will be a third characteristic of our ideal community that there shall be in it no preventable disease. We have learned how to stamp out certain diseases, yellow fever, cholera, smallpox, and have done it. We have learned how to stamp out other diseases, tuberculosis and typhoid, for example, and have not done it. It is a question of taking the trouble, paying the price, putting into

## FORCES

effect, both individually and as social policies, the remedies which are at hand. The appalling accidents on railways and in industrial establishments, we might in large part prevent, if we were willing to modify our laws and do the things which we know perfectly require to be done, or about which we might easily know, if we were willing to take the trouble to inquire. Preventable disease, probably not less than half of all the disease which we now have, and preventable accidents, probably two-thirds of those which we now have, will certainly disappear when, as a result of the spiritual awakening in the churches, there is a private and a public conscience which will deal with their causes.

A fourth feature of our ideal community will be a protected childhood. The right of a child to be well-born will be recognized. Race suicide may take the form of unfit births. The evils directly due to the propagation of the feeble-minded are written indelibly in the records of prisons, jails, reformatories, almshouses, hospitals, and overseers of the poor the country over. Pro-

## SOCIAL FORCES

tection of the child from exposure at birth, from cruelty and neglect, has been to a great extent accomplished. Just now the primary social concern is for the protection of childhood from premature employment. When the attention of bishops, pastors, and laymen in all the churches is directed specifically toward this evil the awakening will surely come. The exploitation of the children for the sake of profit is so shocking a fact of modern industry that when an awakened church stands face to face with it one or the other must give way.

March 28, 1908.


## **XXIV**

### **RELIGION AND PROGRESS**



## XXIV

### RELIGION AND PROGRESS

DVANCE of a desirable kind implies stability and co-ordination as well as movement. Not all motion, by any means, is progress. St. Vitus's dance is as distressing as stupor, and social movements resembling locomotor ataxia, even if in a right direction, do not inspire confidence that the goal will ever really be attained or that the journey itself will be comfortable.

Certain social institutions, of which the family and the church are foremost and in a group by themselves, contribute conspicuously to this element of stability and integration. The family is of all socializing agencies the one which contributes most to insure that individuals shall not depart so far from the normal as to destroy completely

## SOCIAL

their usefulness to others and their own chance of happiness. Through a long childhood impressions are made, examples are set for imitation, discipline is exercised, elementary ethical principles are inculcated, health is preserved by warding off disease, by care in sickness, and by gradual development of the physical powers under parental oversight, lessons of infinite variety are taught, in the main unconsciously, of which the effect in its totality is to mould the individual for his normal and legitimate place in society, to fit him to take his part in work, in enjoyment, and in the whole round of human interests. The family may fall far short of doing this in particular instances. Instead of the natural relation between parent and child, there may be only a comparatively brief physical dependence, and the more complete socializing process may fail entirely, or may be carried on outside the home. Instinctively, however, we feel that such a home fails of its true character, that it is abnormal.

The family, then, is an integrating, harmonizing, socializing institution, lessening the difficulties,

## FORCES

in any case numerous enough, which the average person meets in understanding his fellow beings, getting on with them, giving them useful service, and obtaining from them the full benefits which they should naturally give in return. The family is so near to us, so familiar, so much a matter of course, that it is difficult to appreciate its real importance. We are so fully committed to the appreciation of our own individual homes, and attach so much meaning to the terms which describe relationships within the home, that it is hard to realize that the family is an institution, of interest as such to sociologists, an object of attack by iconoclasts, of study by historians, and, let us also believe, of design by an omniscient mind not ours, exercising through the ages a power not our own, making for righteousness and for social welfare.

Alongside the family, more ancient than the family in precisely its present form, working in part through the family, is another integrating, conservative, socializing force which in the most general terms we call religion. Unfortunately

the outward embodiment of this influence is not entirely at one with itself. We must speak of the churches, and even as we do this we suggest to some minds influences and forces which they feel to be antagonistic rather than favorable to progress and social welfare. Yet those who have this feeling and who turn elsewhere for a substitute for the church from which they are alienated, only give unintentional tribute to the permanent and universal need which for countless millions religion has met and which religion alone will be able to meet for the future millions of the race. Church organizations, like other institutions, may undergo processes of growth, adaptation, and decay, although we must not be misled by the analogy of the animal organism into the hasty view that they are inevitably to decay and perish by the mere lapse of time. The laws of the growth of institutions are after their own kind; and it is only the family among social institutions that can challenge comparison with the great religions as to antiquity or stability, or the appeal to fundamental human instincts and needs, or the measure

## FORCES

of control which they exercise over the individual.

All this might be true without leading to the conviction that religion has any present utility as a factor in human progress. Antiquity, authority, and a powerful appeal to sentiment, are to many minds only so many presumptive evidences of an utter lack of adaptation to modern needs. If institutions are old, they are probably obsolete. If they control, it is probably for selfish ends. If they appeal to primitive and universal instincts, they are probably of no use to the more sophisticated and cultivated minds that are shaping twentieth century destinies. While this impatience with the ancient, the authoritative, and the conservative is not unnatural and is perhaps in itself a very wholesome thing, it has its dangers. Of course it cannot pretend not to be unscientific. It makes a good agitator, a brave leader in a dubious conflict, a loyal and reckless champion of progress at whatever cost. But it does not make the wise leader, or the great teacher, or the true friend of substantial and lasting progress.

## SOCIAL

Leaders who win and deserve implicit confidence, whatever decision and courage they may show in the face of the enemy, have another side. They have also an open mind, thoughtful, discriminating, serious, constantly inquiring whether the need of the time is not for holding ground already won rather than for immediate advance. In this they do not take counsel of their own weariness, or of inertia, or of the difficulties to be encountered, but of what they profoundly feel to be the great social needs. There is an inertia of motion as well as of rest.

Now religion, like domestic life, affords the means of welding society into a more perfect organism. It contributes to the more harmonious action of all the elements in society. The religious citizen is a better citizen, just as, other things being equal, the family man is a better citizen, for the reason that he has a greater stake in society. He has more motives and stronger motives for suiting himself to his fellows in all the numerous ways that strengthen society and promote its evolution to a higher stage of development. He

## FORCES

attaches more importance to his own life and to the lives of others. Selfishness departs from him and the law of service rules him. He acknowledges obligations which the irreligious or the non-religious do not acknowledge, and he looks for and obtains pleasures and satisfactions which are to be found only in the religious life. If therefore integration, coördination, a more intimate relation between the individual and society, are essential to social progress, religion must be reckoned one of its most powerful factors.

October 30, 1909




**XXV**

**WHAT WE BELIEVE**



## XXV

### WHAT WE BELIEVE

 FAITH is a therapeutic agent, much relied upon by wise physicians no less than by charlatans and quacks. Faith is the great energizer, through which we tap new levels of physical and mental resources. Faith is the universal socializing power, transforming savages into citizens, and resolving ancient inheritances of animal fear and personal hatred and selfish egotism into wholesome antagonism to that which injures society, and a desire for that higher individual good which is to be found only in the common welfare. Let us therefore build up our faith, in reason and mutual understanding, and let us not, through craven fear of being mis-

## SOCIAL

judged, neglect to formulate our creed either in religion, or in hygiene, or yet in social work.

We believe in men. In spite of all individual failures and incomplete lives, in spite of war and crime, in spite of suffering and disease, in spite of accident and premature death, even in spite of poverty and dependence, we believe in the inherent nobility and the latent tendency towards the good in the human soul. The failure is accidental, partial, temporary. The desire for right living and rational conduct is universal, natural, and in the end dominant.

Love for mankind, such as socialism, for example, assumes, and extending even to our enemies, as Christianity enjoins, implies that in the last analysis mankind is lovable. A bad heredity, a bad education, a vicious environment, an ill-timed temptation, limiting or distorting habits, an imperfect bodily mechanism, or some other impediment, may in any instance for the time being thwart the full development of personality, but just as surely as physical nature on the whole tends towards health, so surely does the soul of

## FORCES

man tend also towards health, towards development into a social, neighbor-loving, law-abiding, genuinely civilized being. This our faith is in men, not in an abstraction, but in the particular human beings who make our own nation and who people the earth in this generation: those who toil in factories and on railways, those who throng the offices and stores, our children at home and in school, women who live at home and those who earn their livelihood abroad, even those forlorn men and women who ask for charity and those who put themselves outside the pale of social life by infringing upon the laws,—the poor and the criminal, we believe in them quite as much as in the rich and prosperous. Very often their burdens are heavier and their shortcomings more easily to be excused.

We believe in natural law both in the physical and in the spiritual world, and that the two worlds are one. Fire burns. Rum poisons. Vice degrades. Dishonesty reacts disastrously. Dirt and infection destroy vigor and life itself. Worry also kills. Overwork, excessive hours of

## SOCIAL

labor, nervous strain, impure and poisoned air, congestion of population, a low standard of living, are not merely results of an inherited uneconomic and unsocial régime, though they are that primarily. They are also, secondarily, causes—and the main causes—of the grave social evils under which our towns groan and even our farms cry aloud for relief.

Men are at least in so far free that they may do the things which injure the body and deform the soul, and it is our duty to learn for ourselves, and to teach others as we have opportunity, how to exercise wise choice. To do this we must be able to gain their confidence, first by sincere, disinterested sympathy, and then by such careful study and patient consideration of the great common needs of men and of the special needs of our own neighbors as shall enable us to teach truth and avoid error. We shall make no mistake if we dwell earnestly upon the value of temperance, justice, and charity; of fresh air, simple nutritious food, and rational exercise; of the cultivation of those personal habits which by common

## FORCES

consent are called good and those qualities of co-operation and good fellowship which fit one to play his part in the community. For the reason that we believe in law we seek to bring all men to a better understanding of its operation in all spheres which vitally affect their welfare.

We believe in religion. Worship and spiritual communion are among the first of all means of individual growth and social integration. Because social work is for the most part unsectarian it is sometimes most erroneously thought to be irreligious. The fact is that the whole religious world is becoming insufferably weary of sectarianism, and it is safe to say that if the divisions in the churches had not been created in the past they would not now be deliberately established. The organization of charity on an unsectarian basis has served to strengthen rather than undermine true religion. Hebrew, Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Unitarian have worked together with religious fervor and an essentially common faith for the regeneration of families whose affairs have met shipwreck, for the estab-

## SOCIAL FORCES

lishment of charitable institutions, for the repeal of unjust statutes, for the creation of a fragmentary bit of the kingdom of heaven in some neglected corner of the earth. One day their faith will become articulate, their hands will join in a more perfect union, and the deep underlying harmony of all religious life will become apparent to all men.

We believe in service. Personal service cannot, it is true, take the place of generosity; neighborliness cannot take the place of citizenship. Generosity and good citizenship, on the other hand, will not of themselves make an ideal community or produce the fair fruit of character. These require also friendship, neighborliness, the development of social relations and of social instincts. Even as we believe in religion, in law, and in the latent promise in the soul of all God's creatures, so we believe in the utility and the beauty of personal service in every well-considered form.

September 5, 1908

# THE SURVEY

A JOURNAL OF CONSTRUCTIVE PHILANTHROPY

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